104

RUSSIA'S ELECTION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Y 4. SE 2: 104-2-14

Russia's Election: What Does it Mea...

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JULY 10, 1996

Printed for the use of the
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

[CSCE 104–2–14]

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RUSSIA'S ELECTION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 1995

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
Washington, DC

The Commission convened, pursuant to adjournment, at 1:04 p.m., in room 2255, Rayburn House Office Building, Honorable Christopher H. Smith, Chairman of the Commission, presiding.

Commissioners present: the Honorable Christopher H. Smith, the Honorable Steny B. Hoyer, the Honorable Frank R. Wolf, the Honorable Matt Salmon, and the Honorable Benjamin Cardin.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Mr. SMITH. The Commission will come to order. First of all, let me welcome you to this hearing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe on the subject of the recent Presidential election in Russia. The just-completed Presidential elections set the course of Russia's future in terms of economic and political development, rule of law, and foreign policy, and will inevitably affect Russia's relations with the international community and the United States.

As an aside, on March 6th of this year, the Commission was honored to have Sergei Kovalev of the Russian Duma to testify in our hearing on Chechnya. I hate to report—and I heard this yesterday at a hearing we had on international broadcasting—that he has had a heart attack, he is in very serious condition, and I would just hope that you would all join me in praying for his very swift recovery.

He's a very brave man, he spoke out boldly on behalf of human rights, and as the former head of the Presidential Commission on Human Rights in Russia, did so in a way that could be seen very negatively back home, and yet he did it. He came here, he spoke to us, and did not mince his words about what a violation of human rights the aggression in Chechnya was. So I hope you will join me in that.

After two rounds of voting, as you know, Boris Yeltsin was reelected President of Russia. In the first round, he surpassed his closest challenger, the Communist Party chairman Zyuganov by only 3 percentage points. However, in the second round, Yeltsin trounced Zyuganov by an impressive 13 percentage points. Voter turn-out in each round was about 67 percent. The high turn-out testifies to the electorate's continuing involvement in the political process despite many disappointments and economic hardships, and ominous predictions of a low turn-out.

Results also show that, despite their hardships and criticism of President Yeltsin, a considerable majority of Russians were not willing to see the return of the Communist Party reincarnated. Between the first and second round of the elections, Yeltsin appointed third party place finisher and former Russian army general, Aleksandr Lebed, as his National Security Advisor and Secretary of the Security Council.

General Lebed initiated a Kremlin cleaning that saw the departure of Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and other hard line associates of President Yeltsin. Lebed also made some extremely offensive statements regarding religious groups in Russia and Western influence on Russian culture that caused concern about Russia's political future, direction, and tolerance toward minorities. The Commission has publicly expressed its abhorrence of such statements.

President Yeltsin appeared healthy and vigorous during the campaign, but his disappearance from public view after the first round raised doubts about his resilience for a second term. Mr. Yeltsin's health will be of great concern to his colleagues in the Kremlin, his political opposition, and the entire international community.

Meanwhile, Vladimir Zhirinovsky's political health suffered considerably. For the second time in a row, his liberal Democratic Party saw its vote count cut almost in half, going from approximately 23 percent in 1993 in the parliamentary elections of that year, to 11 percent in 1995, and to somewhat less than 6 percent in the 1996 contest.

Although there have been widespread fears and charges that there would be significant fraud and ballot-rigging in the elections, candidates and observers agree that the elections themselves were fair and, with few exceptions, free and fair. The same could not be said of the media coverage, however, during the campaign period as the major Moscow press and the electronic outlets unabashedly supported President Yeltsin, and not just on their editorial pages, out of fear of a return to Communists to power.

Finally, let me mention an issue close to this member and many other members of the Commission and that is the ongoing problems of Chechnya. The Commission has held four hearings on this bloody conflict. Prior to the elections, the Yeltsin administration announced a plan to end the war. Negotiations with the Chechen forces organized by the OSCE mission in Grozny actually looked promising. Mr. Lebed, for his part, has announced his own peace plan, which includes a referendum on independence for part of the Chechen territory.

Unfortunately, in the last couple of days, indications are that the peace process has fallen apart once again. In any event, we now know who will be the head of the state for Russia for the immediate future, but time will tell who will actually rule Russia. Will it be the re-energized President Yeltsin? Will Mr. Lebed "make the weather," as the Russians say, or will he burn out in a struggle of wills within the walls of the Kremlin?

Or is it, as some would contend, that the mafia rules Russia anyway? Maybe the true rulers of Russia are the 10,000 bureaucrats as Tsar Nicholas the First once lamented. These are just some of the questions that our guests today are uniquely qualified to an-

swer, along with other questions, which will surely arise as a result of the Russian Presidential election.

For our first panel today, it's a great pleasure to welcome again Ambassador James Collins, Ambassador-at-large for the Newly Independent States and Russia. Ambassador Collins previously served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the American Embassy in Moscow from 1990 to 1993. In addition to various management positions at the State Department, Ambassador Collins has served as Director for Intelligence Policy at the National Security Council. Before joining the Department of State, he taught Russian and European history at the United States Naval Academy.

On our second panel, we are pleased to have Dr. Michael McFaul, assistant professor of political science at Stanford University and senior colleague at the Carnegie Endowment. Dr. McFaul is just returning from his Carnegie office in Moscow and I think I can say he is the most widely quoted Western specialist on the recent Presidential elections, and perhaps last December's parliamentary elections as well.

The professor's articles have appeared in numerous scholarly journals and other major U.S. newspapers and journals. He is the author of several books including, with Sergei Markov, "The Troubled Birth of Russian Democracy: Political Parties, Programs and Profiles."

Our next panelist is a gentleman recognized not only for his professional expertise in Soviet and Russian studies, but for his significant contribution in the area of human rights, especially in exposing the abuse of psychiatry during the Soviet era. Peter Reddaway is a professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University.

The professor has also been the Director of the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, a senior fellow at Columbia University, and a fellow of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. He's the author of many works, including "Authority, Power and Policy in the USSR"; "Uncensored Russia"; "Lenin: The Man, the Theorist, The Leader"; and "Russia's Political Hospitals."

Our third panelist is a scholar with a wide background in issues on Russia and the Soviet Union. Blair Ruble is Director of the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies. He previously worked at the Social Science Research Council in New York City and the National Council for Soviet and East European Research in Washington.

His most recent book publications include *Money Sings! The Politics of Urban Space in Post-Soviet Yaroslavl* and *Leningrad, Shaping a Soviet City*. Dr. Ruble has been published in the opinion pages of many U.S. newspapers and is a frequent commentator on national news media programs.

Gentlemen, I do thank you for taking the time to prepare your testimonies and for being willing to offer your considerable expertise and advice to the Commission and, by extension, to the Congress. Ambassador Collins, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR JAMES COLLINS

Amb. COLLINS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First I join you in hoping that Sergei Kovalev will fully recover. I've known

and worked with him since 1990. He is one of the great men of his time in Russia and has contributed immensely to the process of bringing about a more open society.

I have a statement that I've given which I would ask to have entered in full in the record, and I have a brief opening statement.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, your full statement will be made a part of the record.

Amb. COLLINS. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and the Commission members today to address your interest in the Russian Presidential election. The two rounds of the Russian Presidential election conducted June 16 and July 3 were an enormous success for the Russian people. They represent a milestone in Russia's pursuit of democracy and for the course of U.S. engagement with post-communist Russia.

In terms of process, the election has been generally judged as free and fair. It was a vigorously fought campaign. In terms of political message and mandate, the Russian people faced a clear choice between two different records, two different systems, and two different hopes for the future.

By a margin of more than 13 percent, they rendered a decisive judgment, to reject the communist option with its appeal to the values and models of the past and to stay with leadership which seeks to base Russia's future on the principles of a market economy and a society based on a constitution and consent of the governed.

It's the administration's view, as Secretary Christopher stated in 1993 and again earlier this year, that Russia's struggle to transform itself will be long and hard and that success is by no means assured. The Russian Presidential election, I would argue, both reaffirmed rejection of the past and kept open important opportunities for the success of Russia's positive transformation.

It also reaffirmed the Russian people's belief in the politics and economics of choice, and their view that the path to success leads forward rather than backward. Many pundits, experts, and observers doubted the elections would succeed or even be held. Predictions held, for example, that widespread and substantial fraud was inevitable despite the presence of election monitors in polling places and comprehensive means of checking the vote counts.

Yet, that was not the outcome. Mr. Chairman, I ask to be included in the record the report of the observer mission of the OSCE which concluded that, and I quote, "In general, the election was well-managed and efficiently run," and that, "this election is a further consolidation of the democratic process in the Russian Federation."

Mr. SMITH. Your full statement and that report will be included.

Amb. COLLINS. Thank you very much. An historic event for Russia, the Russian electorate's decision has vital consequences for all of us as well. In revalidating the mandate for President Yeltsin to lead Russia and to persevere in Russia's transformation, the Russian people have also validated the progress our nations have made in building the new relationship based on cooperation, not confrontation.

The election result reflected the work of 5 years of bipartisan foreign policy. Americans cannot and should not claim credit for the outcome of Russia's election, but the United States, in large part

thanks to the work of Congress, can claim credit for maintaining policies of support for democracy and economic reform in Russia.

Together with our comprehensive engagement with Russia, these policies provided incentives for the peoples of Russia to build new lives, new economic mechanisms which are closely connected with the outside world and not isolated from it. "Steady as she goes" should be our watchword now. We can afford to remain patient, assuring the Russians that our doors remain open to cooperation on the full range of security, economic, and political issues, while at the same time neither ignoring nor condoning Russian policies and actions which are destructive.

Over the past 5 years, the United States has supported democratic change and free markets, and we have encouraged Russia's increasingly close and beneficial association with the community of democratic nations. This policy of engagement has had direct benefits to the United States and has already helped make every American more secure.

The START I Treaty will enable us to cut our nuclear arsenals by 9,000 warheads; and the START II Treaty, which was ratified by the Senate in January, and which President Yeltsin has pledged to get ratified in the Duma later this year, will cut another 5,000. We've also worked with Russia and three of its neighbors—Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakastan—to make sure that the breakup of the Soviet Union did not lead to the proliferation of nuclear weapons states.

Russia has withdrawn its soldiers from Germany, the former Warsaw Pact countries of Eastern Europe and the Baltic States. We will continue to support Russia's reform and integration into the world economy. We believe that the mandate President Yeltsin has won can and should be used to re-energize reform.

We're therefore encouraged by the statement President Yeltsin made today, pledging that Russia will remain on the course of reform. In the months ahead, we will continue to pursue a wide-ranging security and foreign policy agenda with the Russian Federation. We would like to see the Duma move forward with ratification of START-II. We would like to sign a comprehensive test ban treaty in September. We would like to continue our cooperation addressing regional conflicts in the Middle East and Bosnia.

Of course, differences remain, for instance, on Chechnya, on NATO enlargement, and Moscow's proposed nuclear reactor sale to Iran. We will continue to address these issues frankly. It is high time that Russia ended its brutal operation in Chechnya and found a peaceful solution to the problems there. As Secretary Christopher has said, however, we will cooperate with the Russians where we can and we will manage our differences where necessary.

We have acted promptly on our agenda following the economics. President Clinton spoke with President Yeltsin on July 5th, and Vice President Gore will travel to Moscow July 13th for the seventh meeting of the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission. In Moscow, the vice President will have the opportunity to review key elements of our agenda with the highest levels of the Russian Government.

We have been quick off the mark after the elections, but consistent with a deliberately conceived policy in place since the first days of the administration. It is a policy that has helped to turn a

former adversary into a country with which we cooperate on many issues. It is a policy that has contributed to our own and to global security, and it is a policy, Mr. Chairman, behind which I think all Americans can continue to unite. Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Ambassador Collins. I recognize Commissioner Cardin, if he has any opening statement.

Mr. CARDIN. No, thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Ambassador, let me ask you a couple of questions. Meeting for lunch below us, just a few feet away, is Prime Minister Netanyahu. We heard him give a very rousing address to a joint session of Congress, and I asked him a question 15, 20 minutes ago about General Lebed and what this might portend for a rise or a continued rise of anti-Semitism in Russia; and his answer basically was that they want to keep the doors open. They're hoping that the free flow of emigres will continue out of Russia, and, you know, didn't go much further beyond that; and I think he has a number of thoughts that perhaps in private he might express.

But, you know, we all heard some very discouraging comments coming out of the general's mouth, calling Mormons "scum" and saying some very derogatory things about Jews; and he's also calling for a restoration of the vice presidency, presumably he wants a name plate with his own name on there. But he certainly has a tremendous amount of power in his new position, as we all know.

What has the administration done to protest those kinds of statements? The human rights record in Yeltsin's first term was questionable. We saw a diminution of various rights. Some churches became more or less second-class churches, and religious freedom was notoriously attacked in many of these countries. In Russia, we would like to see true openness in religious freedom and tolerance respected.

General Lebed, in my view—especially given the questionable character or status of President Yeltsin's health—could very quickly emerge even more powerful than he already is. Given those statements, what is the administration doing to convey our concerns about this?

Amb. COLLINS. Well, first of all, we spoke out very quickly. We called them objectionable, obnoxious, disturbing; made it very clear publicly that this is the kind of statement and, more importantly I suspect, the kind of thinking that is very distressing and can be very disruptive of our relations if it carried into some kind of action.

In addition to that, I can tell you that the statements were raised at the highest levels in Lyon at the summit, and we have made very clear to other officials our great concern about what they might portend. At the same time, we have been in touch with our colleagues in other countries and we have tried to maintain our own sense of perspective on the position that Mr. Lebed actually holds.

Under the Russian constitution, Mr. Lebed is not the successor to President Yeltsin should anything untoward happen. Prime Minister Chernomyrdin holds that position; and, under the constitution, were anything to incapacitate President Yeltsin, he would succeed and there would then have to be elections within a period of 90 days.

Secondly, I would note that President Yeltsin has actually asked Prime Minister Chernomyrdin to form the new government. He did that very quickly; and, therefore, in some sense, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin is being given very substantial authority to shape the nature and the course of the Yeltsin administration.

Thirdly, I would simply say that at this time, it seems a bit premature to go as far as many, I think, in the media have been inclined to do in rendering a judgment about just what Mr. Lebed's responsibilities are going to be. Yes, we know what his title is, but the actual position has varied over the course of its existence in the last 4 years.

We know that Mr. Lebed himself focused very heavily in his campaign on military reform and on law and order in dealing with crime and corruption. I think, simply to sum up, we are all watching this very closely. We believe that any signals that would lead to the idea there will be a resurgence of religious intolerance is something to be taken very seriously and to be brought up to the attention of the officials very quickly and very forcefully, and that has been done in this case.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that. You may know, earlier in this session, I offered legislation that passed the House and eventually passed both bodies as part of a larger bill and that was to extend the Lautenberg Categories. Since that was vetoed, I have another bill for which I am trying to gather support among Democratic and Republican colleagues. The bill takes non-controversial—as non-controversial as they come—items which were included in previous bills that had been vetoed and tries to repackage them.

One of the most important elements of that Human Rights Restoration Act, as we're calling it, would be an extension of the Lautenberg Categories as a safety valve, if you will, for people who have traditionally been victimized, and may indeed still be, allowing them to escape. Does the administration support extending the Lautenberg Categories?

Amb. COLLINS. I think I'd have to review the question. We, of course, are doing what we can to try to build the structures and the assurances within Russian society that this kind of persecution is not going to take place. I think for the most part, the record has been a constructive one over the last 4 or 5 years of a growing environment of religious tolerance, and we believe that is the most important policy we can pursue.

I would look very carefully and would be happy to come back to you with an opinion on the pending legislation.

Mr. SMITH. It seems to me that, at worst, it would be benign legislation if there's no problem since we are still in a very questionable period. You know, it could bridge the gap between what we think may be going on and some of the concerns of resurgence. The subcommittee had a full day of hearings on the rising tide of anti-Semitism and it is very troubling. So I would hope that you would take a good look——

Amb. COLLINS. We certainly will.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. Then you could get back to us.

Amb. COLLINS. Absolutely.

Mr. SMITH. As you know, on the question of Chechnya, we've had differences of opinion and we've had arguments about that issue.

Yelena Bonner and many others have testified before the Commission about that terrible situation. Well, Boris Yeltsin gave some indications right before the election that they would really try to pursue peace aggressively there.

Now that the election is over and especially in light of some of the recent events during the last couple of days, do you believe that there is a sincere effort? Was it a political ploy? Is the jury still out?

Amb. COLLINS. I have to say the news from the last couple of days is disturbing and discouraging. There has been a breakdown, not widespread but still disturbing, of the cease-fire. We are seeing some revival of artillery shelling against one or two villages and some aerial bombardment. This is a very distressing and disturbing development.

At the same time, we have seen pledges that the political process is something that will go forward and that there's a determination to negotiate a settlement, and I guess my answer to you has to be that the returns are out. What I can tell you is that we are making clear at every possible occasion, at the political and most senior levels, our view of the importance and indeed the vital importance of getting this conflict stopped and getting a political settlement in place.

Again, I can tell you that it was raised in Lyon, and if it is necessary and appropriate, it will be raised when the Vice President goes. I think at the same time, a great deal of credit is due to the OSCE and to its people who have been working very hard to try to continue to encourage the process of a negotiated settlement in Grozny. They're still doing that. I'm quite proud of the fact that we have had an American Foreign Service officer as part of that mission, really for some time. We happen to have a hiatus at the moment, but another will be joining them shortly.

We are doing also what we can through that mechanism to push the process of negotiation and conciliation, but it is very frustrating and I would not try to say to you anything other than that I am quite discouraged to see, you know, a revival of fighting at this point.

Mr. SMITH. In a recent *New York Times* article, Vice President Gore indicated that trade and investment would be the centerpiece of our relations with Russia. Could you tell me what specifically the administration is planning on doing with regards to human rights?

I've been working, along with many of my colleagues, on the human rights issue, and I chair the International Operations and Human Rights Subcommittee, and the biggest disappointment has been this de-linking, de-coupling of human rights with trade, most notably with regards to the People's Republic of China, but with other areas, too, including Vietnam. Without question, in my view at least, Russia is not out of the woods. I think it would be premature to make human rights a sub-issue or a back-burner issue. Perhaps now more than ever in the recent couple of years, I think it really needs to be put forward. What is the administration going to do on that?

Amb. COLLINS. Well, I don't think that the Vice President, in any way, meant to suggest that if you're going to do trade and invest-

ment, you're not going to do human rights. That certainly isn't the case. Human rights, the reform of Russia's society and its transformation to a pluralistic democracy that respects human rights have been, in a sense, at the very foundation of the kind of relationship that has been evolving and developing.

It is also quite true that Russians themselves and certainly we do not find Russia has made that transformation and is now fully, somehow, in a position to say that its institutions are in place to assure that democracy and human rights are somehow permanent. Indeed, it seems to me, we have agreed with the Congress for the last 4 years that the support of programs that can lead to respect for human rights, democratization, rule of law, has to be a priority effort of our joint work.

The Congress has been quite generous in funding Freedom Support Act programs that have done everything from work as they did before this election to ensure that Russians are trained in how to conduct an election and how parties organize and work, poll watching and so forth, on up through the efforts to institutionalize trial by jury and many of the aspects of human rights and civil liberties that are, we think, essential to the future.

That process is going to continue and that priority is going to continue. At the same time, I think it is also fair that one of the most important things that has taken place to develop, if you will, an open and more pluralistic society has been the economic transformation of Russia.

The de-monopolization of economic power—and, if you will, the de-evolution of economic decisionmaking and the ability to use resources through privatization—is also a democratizing factor; and I think we are at a stage where, in some sense, perhaps one of the great threats to democracy would be a failure to assist and work with the Russians to begin to turn their economy around and create growth.

In that spirit, as well as the fact that it's in our interest to develop trade and investment with Russia, that the Vice President was also speaking about the importance of that as a priority matter for the coming phase. President Yeltsin's government is also putting emphasis on growth, trade and investment, and the reform of the sector of social issues, as they've been called, in this coming phase.

Mr. SMITH. I have a number of questions, and I'll submit some for the record. Let me ask one final question before yielding to Mr. Cardin. What progress is being made on the Russian troops leaving Moldova by October 1997 as stipulated in the treaty?

Amb. COLLINS. The agreement that Russia signed with Moldova calls for the withdrawal of troops in 3 years. The problem is there is a disagreement between Moldova and Russia over when those 3 years start. The Russian Duma has taken the position that it starts when the agreement is ratified, and it has not yet been ratified.

The position of our Government is that the Moldovans have the right to request the withdrawal of Russian troops and equipment and that this is something that should be done. They have removed some equipment, not a substantial amount. They have destroyed some, basically because it was dangerous, but we have not yet seen the kind of progress on that issue that we want to see; and it is

a subject on our agenda, and it's something with which I had intense discussions over the last year with President Snegur and other members of his government.

They make no bones about two things. They want the Russian army out and they are not prepared to accept bases under the present conditions, and they are working with the Russian Government to achieve both of these objectives and we support them in doing so.

Mr. SMITH. On a very technical point, do we agree with the Russians that the clock starts ticking upon ratification by the Duma?

Amb. COLLINS. Well, I'm not sure we're in a position to agree or disagree. As far as I'm concerned, the Government of Moldova has the full right, because it is a sovereign state, to request the withdrawal of the Russian troops and it's up to them, I think, to agree with the Russians on how to accomplish that. I guess it's a matter of Russian law. I don't want to pronounce myself on how they interpret their law. Moldovans believe that this should be taking place, and I think they have the right to that.

Mr. SMITH. Do we consider that treaty obligation binding on the Russians?

Amb. COLLINS. I think I'm going to have to ask a lawyer for—I mean, in terms of a legal opinion. I'd have to ask my legal people. I'll do that.

Mr. SMITH. You'll do that and provide——

Amb. COLLINS. But I want to make clear that the Government of Moldova has every right to request and to have achieved the withdrawal of those troops.

Mr. SMITH. I know as a policy, but when there's a specific legal obligation——

Amb. COLLINS. I'll find out.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. I think Secretary Talbott put it very well that after the elections, we fully expect Russians to live up to all of their international treaties and obligations.

Amb. COLLINS. I will find out.

Mr. SMITH. This is one agreement that they should be living up to.

Amb. COLLINS. I will find out what our legal people would consider it.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. Cardin?

Mr. CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First let me thank you for holding these hearings. I think they're extremely important and, obviously, very timely.

Mr. Ambassador, let me thank you for your presentation and also your service to our country. A group of us just came back from the OSCE meetings in Stockholm, and we had a chance to meet with our fellow parliamentarians from Russia to talk a little bit about the elections and some of the other issues that have been raised today.

We also had the displeasure of listening to Mr. Zhirinovsky several times give his remarks and obviously, most of the times, we simply dismissed his comments. However, General Lebed's comments had many of us concerned that perhaps there are more widespread extremist views in Russia than we would like to see. Per-

haps some of these extremists are becoming part of the Government of Russia.

I appreciate your comments and the comments of our Government in condemning the anti-Semitic comments of General Lebed. I'm curious as to whether we've had any response from Mr. Yeltsin or the Government of Russia in regards to those comments.

Amb. COLLINS. Not in an official sense. When we have raised this subject, we have had an affirmation of the position that religious freedoms and religious toleration are basic to the Russian constitution and the Russian Government under President Yeltsin.

Mr. CARDIN.Of course, your response is very diplomatic before this Commission. Let me just say in a very undiplomatic way that it seems to me that if a representative of the Russian Government makes those types of statements, it's incumbent upon Mr. Yeltsin and others to condemn those remarks. That is leadership. I certainly expect to see that type of response by the Russian Government and would ask you to relay that message.

During this past election, there was a much closer relationship between Russia and Iran, Iraq, and Cuba and other countries that are a great concern to the United States' foreign policy. Will you give us an assessment as to whether these relationships were primarily a result of the politics in Russia for the election or if it is an indication of closer ties between Russia, Iraq, and Iran and perhaps Cuba in the second term of the Yeltsin administration.

Amb. COLLINS. I think, first of all, it's probably fair to say that the relationship that Russia has had with those countries has never been really interrupted. They have maintained diplomatic relations and so forth with these countries really all the way through. I think it's also the case that they have observed the U.N. sanctions regimes when it's come to their dealings with the countries where that's a factor.

At the same time, I think we don't see eye to eye with the relationships with those countries. We certainly have a strong difference of opinion with the Government of Russia over their nuclear cooperation with Iran, for instance, and that has been a subject of high level and continuous discussion. I think it's very difficult to say what the policy will develop to be. I would certainly see no indication that the Russians intend to abandon their observation of the sanctions regimes, for instance. I think they understand that's a legal obligation.

But I think it is certainly the case that they believe that the conduct of trade and normal relations on an economic and commercial basis is something which they have the right to do, and they probably are going to pursue that. We have been paying very close attention to the trade with Cuba to see whether that, in fact, is on a commercial basis, and we continue to monitor that, partly because of new legislation.

I do not, at this point, see any indication of some great major change in these relations, but I don't see a move to curtail them either. I think we will see Russia pursuing its interests and relations with these countries, particularly commercial interests, as it is appropriate from their point of view and consistent with the U.N. regimes.

I don't think we have seen, however, the kind of relations of the former Soviet period when those relations were essentially politically driven and where the economic aspect had virtually no commercial content to it. Today, if you don't get paid, you don't get goods out of Russia; and that is a limiting factor in the degree to which they're going to develop their relations with all of these states.

Mr. CARDIN. Let me just conclude by underscoring the point that our chairman, Mr. Smith, made regarding his disappointment with the de-linkage of trade and human rights as it relates to our relationship with Russia. It is very important, considering the historical linkage that we've made, that it is clear to the Russian Federation that we expect cooperation on the international human rights front.

Let me just give you one example. Judge Cassese, who is the chief judge of the War Crimes Tribunal in Yugoslavia, sent a letter to the United Nations requesting sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro for their failure to cooperate with the War Crimes Tribunal. I would hope that our country would assume a leadership role in cooperating with the Tribunal, imposing the necessary sanctions against those countries that do not cooperate and turn over war criminals to the Tribunal.

Russia may take a different view on the issue of cooperation with the Tribunal. We might have a very strong position toward Russia on this issue. Otherwise, it would be very easy for this matter to go unnoticed and, under those circumstances, war criminals would remain at large.

So I would just urge you to make it clear that is U.S. policy with regards to Russia that we expect Russia's leadership, along with ours, to request that all nations comply with the U.N. resolution establishing the work of the War Crimes Tribunal and cooperate and turn over those persons that have been indicted for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Cardin.

Mr. Wolf.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK R. WOLF

Mr. WOLF. Thank you, Mr. Smith. Mr. Collins, two issues. One, I wanted to follow up on what Mr. Cardin said. I think they have, before this election, privatized anti-Semitism in the former Soviet Union and Russia and now, I think it may be going from the privatizing to bringing it back into the Government. I think the administration will have to speak out and be much bolder in talking about these issues, similar to what President Reagan did back in the '80's.

You all make too much of your relationship with Boris Yeltsin and your telephone calls back and forth; and everything you do tends to be in private, but very little of it tends to be in public. You will demoralize the people in the former Soviet Union and you will make those of us on this side who are suspect of you even more suspect. So if this is the policy of the Clinton administration, it should speak out very boldly to President Yeltsin publicly and to every Soviet official publicly whenever and wherever you can.

Every time your administration testifies, it's always off the record privately we're saying this and saying that. I don't think you've done enough publicly. Now, moving into the second point, your policy, not knowingly, but your policy in Chechnya has resulted in the death of a lot of people. Every time administration people go to Russia and when the President meets with Yeltsin, if you talk to people in Chechnya and down there, they come in and they clean the place out.

I was in Grozny; I was in Chechnya. We saw what they did down there. They literally cleaned the place out. They shell it. The "grad" missiles come in, MIGs come in. They bomb it, they bomb it, they bomb it, and they bomb it until finally the Chechens go underground and then there's a period of calm for 2 or 3 days. You can almost track the death rate with the visits that we make.

The one time Secretary Christopher went there, he never publicly raised the issue. Now, he privately may have whispered in somebody's ear, but he never publicly raised the issue. I would bring to your attention the article that was by Ms. Geyer that was in *The Washington Times* yesterday. It's time for this administration to publicly be involved, and the OSCE people are captive, basically, in their compounds. They're not moving around down there nearly as much as you may think they are.

If the United States does not publicly get involved, offer to be a mediator or do something publicly, then, frankly, I think a lot of the death that takes place will be as a result, indirectly I stress. I'm not suggesting anybody in the administration directly is knowing that this will take place, but indirectly the deaths of a lot of people will be basically as a result of the administration not being active.

There will be nothing wrong with offering, and frankly, in OSCE, nothing happens there really if the United States is not directly involved, offering to send somebody, whether it be a retired general or somebody to come over there and offer as a mediator or to talk to them. Now I worry, after the elections are over and we've seen what's happened, they will resume fighting down there; and I heard NPR the other day where they're going to go in and it's just devastating what little is left and in the process, a lot of Russian soldiers are frightened to death. At nighttime the Russian soldiers literally hunker down because they are afraid—and then those missiles and the things start coming in and then innocent civilians will be killed.

So I'd like to hear you tell us that rather than having these great telephone conversations back and forth with Boris Yeltsin, that our Government will forcibly, publicly speak out to be the beacon that Netanyahu was talking about when he spoke to the Congress today. Be the beacon with regard to human rights and democracy. It can't be private back channels. It has to be public so that not only do the American people know what you're saying, but the average person in Moscow and the Ural Mountains, wherever they may be, know that the United States is being a pressure point with regard to human rights and human rights in Chechnya, human rights with regard to anti-Semitism, and any other things that are taking place.

Do you have any comments? Why hasn't the administration spoken out more on Chechnya? Do you consider Chechnya to be kind of a civil war? I have an exchange of letters with the administration that go back and forth and back and forth. I probably have 10 or 11 letters, and it seems that nothing ever changes.

Mr. SMITH. Would the gentleman yield before Ambassador Collins responds?

Mr. WOLF. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. I was very disappointed by President Clinton's statement, a reiteration of what the State Department put out in the early dark days of the Chechen conflict, when he again likened it to the United States Civil War. I thought that very wrong-headed and misguided perception of that conflict had been discarded in the trash heap, only to be resurrected by the President himself.

Again, and we've argued over this, Vice President Gore was standing there with Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and said this is an internal matter—and I know you differ with this—but if that didn't send a green light or at least a "we're not going to do much about this" type of light—and again, this isn't partisan. If this message was sent by the Bush administration, I would have been equally concerned, as I was on Bosnia in terms of their foul-ups there.

I'm concerned, and I share the gentleman from Virginia's perspective on this, that the killing continues and, you know, we hear little or nothing about it and again, we get analogies to the United States Civil War. Ambassador?

Mr. WOLF. If I may, before you speak, just to follow-up with what the gentleman said? The Bush administration gave a green light to what took place in some respects—not knowingly, but indirectly—what took place in the former Yugoslavia. They sent green light after green light after green light, which allowed the Serbs and others to do what they did. What the gentleman said, exactly the same thing is taking place here. I will now yield.

Amb. COLLINS. I'd like to address the two issues separately. One is anti-Semitism. I am not prepared to accept the premise that we have not spoken forcefully about anti-Semitism or acted forcefully about anti-Semitism. Now, we may disagree about how what's most effective——

Mr. WOLF. Would you submit for the record then all the statements that the administration has made?

Amb. COLLINS. I will submit the ones that we've made at least recently about Mr. Lebed, which is the most recent issue.

Mr. WOLF. No, I think within the last year and a half. We ought to see the ones that you've done within the last year and a half.

Amb. COLLINS. Well, I will be happy to look through the record and provide it. I will also provide for you the almost daily remarks and statements of the spokesman from the department about Chechnya as well as for the record the things that Secretary Christopher and others have said repeatedly and regularly on the record publicly.

Mr. WOLF. Very few, very few.

Amb. COLLINS. I'm sorry. It's not very few, Mr. Wolf. I respectfully disagree.

Mr. WOLF. But why has——

Amb. COLLINS. They may not be——

Mr. WOLF. If I may interrupt you, sir, why hasn't the President of the United States and the Vice President of the United States spoken out?

Amb. COLLINS. I will provide you the statements that I can provide you. I'm saying only that there has been a regular and steady and forceful record from the Secretary of State and others in this administration publicly calling for an end to that war, a halt to the bloodshed, and a settlement by political means. Now, I can't say more than that and I'll be happy to provide the statements.

Mr. WOLF. The last question. Well, I don't agree with you. I've read every article that has appeared on Chechnya and every statement and you've done very few.

Secondly, what would be wrong with the United States using its good offices, particularly after the victory of Mr. Yeltsin who we all wanted to see win, its victory really not only for us clearly, but more for the Russian people? What would be wrong with now offering an intermediary, a retired general or somebody like that to come over and begin to kind of work to see if we could bring the parties together to resolve the issue whereby the fighting and the killing would stop? What would be wrong with offering that?

Amb. COLLINS. I will take it under consideration. We've discussed this before. We would hope we can get to work the mediation of Mr. Guldimann and his team, which has produced, over the last several weeks, a much diminished situation of fighting; and we are trying to support that effort.

Mr. WOLF. I appreciate that. I think the reason it's been somewhat successful was the elections, the fact that the elections were being held. Now that the elections are over, I think, and I may be wrong and I hope that I am, that the fighting will escalate. There are some in the Russian Government who elected just to devastate that place. I would ask you again, and not to personally criticize you. I apologize publicly if it comes across that way, but what would be wrong?

They may not accept it. The Russians may not accept it, I understand that, but what would be wrong with publicly offering a representative of the United States, somebody like you or retired General Vessey or somebody like that, to offer to go over and work to be the intermediary?

Amb. COLLINS. Well, I don't know that it would be wrong. Let me look at it.

Mr. WOLF. Could you just come back and let me know?

Amb. COLLINS. I will do so.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Hoyer.

Thank you, Mr. Wolf.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. STENY B. HOYER

Mr. HOYER. Thank you very much. I apologize for being late. I was on the floor, there was an amendment to the legislative appropriations bill in which I was interested on the floor. First of all, Mr. Chairman, I've got a statement, if I can include that in the record?

Mr. SMITH. Without objection.

Mr. HOYER. In the time that I was here, I have read your statement, Mr. Ambassador. First, I want to thank you for all you have done. You are one of the United States' real experts on the former Soviet Union, on Russia itself, and your testimony is welcome. I want to congratulate the chairman for having this hearing.

Clearly all of us were pleased by the outcome of the election, not just to the extent that Mr. Yeltsin won, but I think most of us perceived this more expansively as a statement by the Russian people that they did not want a return to the past. As difficult as the present has been and as they perceive the future to be, they wanted to press forward with reforms; and you make that point in your statement. I agree with that wholeheartedly.

Mr. Cardin and I—I don't know whether you mentioned this—have just returned from Stockholm, representing the Commission at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly meeting. Mr. Zhirinovsky was there and made a couple of speeches. He received less than 6 percent support at the Parliamentary Assembly. I think it is a good sign that his support is subsiding drastically.

I want to ask you about the relationship between Chernomyrdin and Lebed. I understand that Chairman Smith, and perhaps Mr. Cardin in his remarks, mentioned the great concern we have about statements made by Mr. Lebed which were anti-Semitic, anti-religious and highly offensive within the Helsinki framework. I have not seen the statement by the administration on this issue, but you just referenced it, and I am pleased to hear that we made a strong statement.

What do you perceive to be the relationship between Lebed, who obviously is very ambitious, and Chernomyrdin, and what will that pose for the Yeltsin administration in the upcoming term?

Amb. COLLINS. Well, President Yeltsin has asked Prime Minister Chernomyrdin to form the next government and he's in the process of doing so. He will be, unless the Duma were for some reason not to accept his nomination, and he will continue to head the government; and therefore, he has a specific set of constitutional responsibilities as well as a very important political position, certainly the most important political position next to President Yeltsin with respect to the economy and many other aspects of the reform agenda.

As I noted earlier in response to another question, the Prime Minister would be the constitutional successor to President Yeltsin were anything to incapacitate the President.

The position of Mr. Lebed, who received some 15 percent of the vote in the first round, is National Security Advisor, so-called, although it's actually Secretary to the National Security Council and National Security Advisor to the President. This is a position which, not unlike our own, I suppose, in some ways, very much depends on the President.

It is not a position which has an official constitutional mandate, at least at present, and certainly is not in the chain of succession, does not have the kind of responsibility for the performance of ministries in the legal sense that the Prime Minister does. Therefore, what his responsibilities will be and how they are carried out is very much going to be a function of how President Yeltsin defines his job.

I think it is premature to say how that's going to take place. It's certainly true that in his campaign. General Lebed, in focusing on the need for a more effective fight against crime and corruption, struck a responsive note among the electorate. I think he also struck a responsive note, in some sense, by appealing, in part, to the nationalist sentiment, although I think it's more the sense of wounded pride.

Those are issues which are before the government of President Yeltsin and what role Mr. Lebed will play in addressing them I don't know, but they're the ones that he made his priorities. The other issue which has been associated with his name, in particular, is military reform; he has called very vigorously for military reform; and I might say he's also called for ending the war in Chechnya, and he's been quite outspoken on that, and I heard on the Russian news before I came down that he's planning to go to Chechnya this week.

I can't really be very precise. I think the role of Mr. Lebed is yet to be defined. It's something that will depend in large part on how President Yeltsin wishes to see him perform those functions. Some of his predecessors in that position have been influential and others have been largely not very influential at all. It's just too early to tell.

Mr. HOYER. Let me ask you a question with respect to another player in the election—the Yavlinsky/Gaidar wing. I don't say it's necessarily the same view, but certainly they are aligned in some ways. What is your perspective in terms of what role, if any, they or their views will play as Mr. Yeltsin moves forward to try to manage and shape the Russian economy?

Obviously the Russian people have made a choice not to go back. What do you believe will be the dynamics between the Yavlinsky/Gaidar view of more vigorous economic reform and Yeltsin's more moderate policies?

Amb. COLLINS. Well, I think, first of all, there's probably one big distinction between Mr. Gaidar and Mr. Yavlinsky. Mr. Gaidar endorsed President Yeltsin; Mr. Yavlinsky ran against him and never really did endorse him, although he asked his supporters to vote against the Communists.

President Yeltsin gave a speech this morning our time, or this afternoon his time, in which he affirmed that his government will continue reform—that it is committed to democracy and to the pursuit of democratic norms. It seems to me that the support that President Yeltsin received from, if you will, the community that in some sense lies behind the symbols of Mr. Gaidar and Mr. Yavlinsky and other leaders of the democratic movement certainly will have influence.

I think there's no question from what we know of the voting patterns that the younger generation, in many ways, the democratic elements, were very much motivated to support President Yeltsin, and therefore one assumes that those views will find reflection in the government. Exactly how that will happen I don't know. Mr. Yavlinsky at the moment seems not to be destined to have a government position. I doubt that Mr. Gaidar will, but I don't know that.

But I think it's almost a certainty that we will have some members of the community within which they work back in the government. But I think one also—what Mr. Yeltsin said today, in some sense, was that he hoped to have an inclusive government; that they had had a hard-fought election; that it was now time to try to attract into the government those who will help him continue the reform process and work with his government.

He wasn't more precise than that, but I assume it means that he's hoping to have not a narrow-based Government, at least; and I would think that the democrats will have representation there in some capacity given the kind of support that they gave the President in his reelection.

Mr. HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. Let me just state that I share the views expressed by Mr. Wolf, and I'm sure by Mr. Smith, and Mr. Cardin. I am a big fan of Secretary Schulz. I think he was someone who very viscerally felt the human rights issue and stood up very strongly for it. When he was in the Soviet Union, or other places, he made very clear his empathy for those who were demonstrating for human rights and for those who had been discriminated against.

I think that is a useful policy for the United States. As Prime Minister Netenyahu indicated today, America is very special in that sense; and the fact that our voice in support of human rights is strong is critically important not only for us, but also for the rest of the world. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Hoyer. Let me ask one additional question, and I will submit a number for the publication of the record. If anyone has any additional questions, please pose them. There was a Washington Post story right before the election, in which Yeltsin had suggested that several of the ministries, health and education, I believe, were mentioned, would go to the Communists. You mentioned the inclusive Government in response to Mr. Hoyer's question.

Do we have any further indication as to whether or not parts of the Government will come under the direction of the Communists?

Amb. COLLINS. No, sir, we don't. There's lots of speculation, of course. The question of who's going to get what jobs is the cottage industry in Moscow now. Mr. Chernomyrdin has said, and Mr. Yeltsin said, there was a victor and therefore it's not going to be a coalition Government. I don't think that anyone has ruled out having some representation from the Communist side there.

But I think it's also important to keep in mind that the Communist Party that ran against Mr. Yeltsin was a very diverse group of people; and most of us, I think, who have watched it believe it kind of runs from Social Democrats over to the old really hard-lined Stalinists, and Mr. Zyuganov performed quite a feat in keeping it together.

But I think it is entirely possible that there will be those who would wish to work with this Government, and I suspect Mr. Yeltsin will look very hard at that in terms of whether or not he can count on them really to be part of a Government that is committed to the kind of values that he is setting out.

Mr. SMITH. Ambassador Collins, thank you very much for your testimony. We appreciate it and we look forward to your timely response on the outstanding questions.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, just as Ambassador Collins goes, I was mentioning to Mr. Cardin that there is no one, I think, in the United States Government who is more respected on a bipartisan fashion than Ambassador Collins when it comes to his knowledge and wisdom with reference to the history of the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation and the emerging CIS states. I have had the opportunity, as I am sure you have, Mr. Chairman, to work with him for over a decade, and have always been impressed with his judgment and his knowledge.

Amb. COLLINS. Thank you very much, Mr. Hoyer.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. I'd like to ask Dr. McFaul, Mr. Reddaway, and Dr. Ruble if they would come to the witness table. Dr. McFaul, could you begin?

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL MCFAUL

Dr. MCFAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a real honor to be here. Let me start by apologizing for not having written remarks. I've just arrived from Moscow. I'll submit those to you and hopefully you can get them into the record later.

Mr. SMITH. They'll be made a part of the record.

Dr. MCFAUL. This election and this, really this last 12 months, this electoral cycle was a real test for Russian democratic institutions and was a real test for us analysts, I think, in predicting and talking about what is going on in Russia. Moving on, what should we expect in Russia. Let me give you my report card.

The first and most important thing I think we've got to realize is that this election happened. This is the first time in the history of this country, the 1000-year history of this country, that the head of state was elected directly by the people. Before we get into the minutia of the problems of that democratic society, I think it's very important that we remember the historical point that we've just seen.

Let's remember the record over the last 12 months. There were very few people that predicted a free and fair election; very few that predicted it would happen at all. We had threats from the Kremlin itself that there was going to be postponement of these elections; and despite all that, at the end of the day, it happened. I was at the conference with the Communists when they talked about the results of the second round.

Nobody, including Mr. Zyuganov, has said that this was not a free and fair election. There were abuses, and we'll get into those; but on the whole, the report card has been very positive for this process. I think that's a real testament to Mr. Yeltsin. It doesn't mean that we have to forgive him for his past problems, but I think we do need to recognize what he did in this electoral process.

Second, in terms of positive news, was the fact that Russians themselves decided that this election was important. We've heard in the Western press and in the nationalist press in Russia, by the way—really interesting combination there—that Russians are somehow genetically prone to authoritarianism, that because of

their culture and their history they like czars and they don't like the democratic process.

I think this test for the Russians has proven emphatically that Russians care about the democratic process. If we could get the kinds of turn-out that they got in the first and second rounds, 70 percent and 67 percent, in our elections, I think that would be a great testament to what we think about our democratic institutions. I think it's time that we recognize the Russian people, that they really do care about the democratic process.

Third, and perhaps most impressively, was how Russians voted. We'd heard in the run-up, especially after the December 1995 elections, that if Russians are given the chance to vote freely and fairly, that they would vote for Communists on the one hand or imperialist nationalists on the other. Now, what is shown very clearly in both the first and second round was that that is just absolutely not true.

Russians knew what the choice was. Despite media manipulation and all that, it was very clear to everybody what this election was about. I spent the entire time watching this election campaign and every person who voted, who showed up to vote on the first and second round, knew the kind of choice they were making and they voted emphatically for reform, not for regression.

Incidentally, this is the first time that a post-communist leader has won the second round of the election. Even the other heroes of democracy in Eastern Europe have never won on the second time around. I think again it's a real testament to show that people knew what they were voting for, to go forward and not backwards.

Fourth and finally, I think the political culture—and this may be too early to tell—but the culture of reconciliation that you see on behalf of Boris Yeltsin and the way that he's talking about dealing with the Duma and dealing with his enemies after the election is also a positive sign. This is something we wouldn't have seen 3 years ago. We most certainly wouldn't have seen it 6 years ago.

The fact that he's talking about reconciliation, bringing in people from other parties into his government, and ultimately submitting his government before the parliament, again is something that's never happened in the history of this country, where the legislative branch actually approved the government. Let's hope it happens peacefully and democratically, but I think all the signs are good that it will.

Having noted those four very positive signs, I think it's also important to recognize that this administration, the United States' administration, that took a lot of criticism in their stance and their policy toward this democratic process, should be recognized ultimately that throughout this period, I'm not saying in past periods and future periods they're correct, but throughout this period, I think the policy was right: quiet support for Boris Yeltsin and emphatic emphasis on the democratic process. That's the good news.

Let me turn to the bad news, and this bad news was equally obvious in watching this democratic process. First, there's no party system in Russia. This was a referendum about the past. It had nothing to do with ideologies. You talked about Mr. Gaidar and Mr. Yavlinsky. It had nothing to do with social democracy, liberalism, conservatism. It was communism, anti-communism. This will be

the last election that you ever see in Russia that will be constructed that way.

Now, what happens in the absence of those organizing ideologies is that it allows for extremists, populists, people without a set of ideas, as Mr. Lebed has shown very clearly in the last few weeks, to come out of the woodwork and with a couple of million dollars and a couple of good campaign handlers, go from being a backbencher in the Duma to being one of the most powerful men in Russia. That, to me, is a very dangerous sign, and it's dangerous because there's not a party system there to control that kind of movement.

Second, civil society is very weak in Russia; there should be no bones about it. The capitalists, that is bankers, business interests, have organized their society and played a very important and crucial role in this election, but other aspects of society did not and that's very alarming and disturbing for the future of democracy.

Third, the super-Presidential system, I think, is very scary. There needs to be an adjustment. There is simply too much power in the office of the presidency in Russia, especially when you have a man like Boris Yeltsin, whom nobody I know in Russia thinks will be able to serve out his second term. It's a very dangerous situation to have too much power concentrated in the presidency.

Fourth, the media showed that when push comes to shove, they were willing to abide by the rules laid down by the President. This, for them, after all was a vote about their survival. I don't blame them for making that choice, but I think it's now incumbent upon them to re-prove their democratic credentials and be a critical force for democracy.

Fifth and finally, rule of law and human rights. There's no good evidence, no good signs, I think, in this electoral process for those concerned with human rights. The draconian statements you've heard from Mr. Lebed that are popular amongst voters, anti-Semitic remarks, anti-Chechen remarks, anti-Caucasian remarks, these are things that are very scary; and it's not a time for people that are worried about this to kick back and say, "Well, democracy has succeeded in Russia. We don't need to think about this."

Now, ultimately, Russians themselves have to deal with these imperfections in their democratic system. When Americans come back from a holiday tour in Russia claiming that they have destroyed the evil empire, I think it does a real disservice to the literally decades of work that have been done by real Russian democrats fighting for the democratic process.

Having said that, I still think the United States can help and has a real role to play in those five areas that I just now outlined. After all, the Agency for International Development in Russia and its grantees working on the democratic process have a very good infrastructure in place to help those very people that are working on those imperfections. The Eurasia Foundation, the National Endowment for Democracy, these are the kinds of agencies and these are folks that you support that can play an important role to help these people when the focus, the international focus, is no longer on Russia watching what happens day to day.

Let me just say finally, to come back to the conversation you had in the first hour, I think it's very clear how you resolve this prob-

lem about Chechnya on the one hand versus U.S. support for Mr. Yeltsin and trade and investment on the other. In fact, I wrote about it after the beginning of the war in Chechnya in the *Washington Times* right after the war.

That is, I think too much of foreign assistance has been devoted to the state, to the institutions of the Russian Government. Somehow it was believed that if we spent money on these bureaucrats that have been there for the last 10 to 20 years, that they would somehow become democratic. That's not the way you get good democratic institutions in Russia.

You need to spend that money on society so that society will be empowered to demand from those institutions the democratic processes; and therefore, it seems to me rather simple how you deal with that. You stop giving money to the Russian state; you start giving money to people like Mr. Kovalev and his organizations that after this election, I think you're quite right, their voice is going to be a lot harder to be heard in Russia. Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much for your very succinct and compelling testimony.

Professor Reddaway.

STATEMENT OF PETER REDDAWAY

Mr. REDDAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Smith. It's a pleasure, as in the past, to give testimony to your Commission. What did the election show? Russians faced a choice between two unattractive candidates for the presidency, Boris Yeltsin and Gennadi Zyuganov. Neither evoked any public enthusiasm except among a few close supporters. President Yeltsin's popularity rating had dipped down earlier in the year to the single digits.

What did Yeltsin's victory in round two show? I believe that it showed for sure probably only one major thing. A little over half of those who voted for a candidate felt that it would be a mistake to entrust Russia again to the Communists. The Communists had done bad things to Russia for 09 years; they could not be trusted to do better a second time around. So most of Yeltsin's voters were primarily, I believe, casting a negative vote against the Communists.

What they were voting for is much less clear. My colleague, Michael McFaul, just said they were voting for reform. I think that's a confusing statement because I don't think it's at all clear now in Russia what reform means. It's a vague, contentless word. Mr. McFaul also said communism/anti-communism. OK. I go with the anti-communism, that's part of my analysis, but anti-communism is not in itself a program.

It's not a set of policies, and what I want to try to indicate is that I think Mr. Yeltsin is moving toward authoritarianism. So is it reform authoritarianism? I think this loose use of the word reform gets us into a lot of trouble. The election also showed, of course, the converse of my main point, namely that almost a half of those who voted for a candidate were ready to entrust Russia's future to a Communist. This was predictable, but of course, discouraging.

However, some, at least of these voters, were simply registering a protest against Yeltsin, not supporting Zyuganov's recipes for Russia. So faith in communism is not as high in Russia as it

seems. Also, Zyuganov's loss of the election will probably lead to serious splits in the Communist camp. This will reduce the threat of Russia being ruled by Communists again in the future, perhaps reduce it forever to nonexistence.

However, it will not lessen the threat that extreme forces of a nationalist variety might, before long, capture the Communist constituency and pose new dangers.

What did the election not show? The election did not show, in my view, those things that conventional wisdom in the United States has claimed that it did. President Clinton set the tone for government statements, and we saw a reflection of it just now from Ambassador Collins, by calling the result "a triumph for democracy," which showed "just how far Russia's political reform has come over the last 5 years."

Among academics, my colleague Michael McFaul called the outcome, "A tremendous victory for democracy and democrats," adding that, "Russians overwhelmingly opted to continue the present course of reform." On the conduct of the election, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott praised "what everyone acknowledges has been a free and fair election."

To take the last point first, in a narrow sense, Mr. Talbott is correct. The voting was orderly and relatively few cases of suspected fraud were reported. These were big pluses, reiterating that Russians are already fully capable of exercising at least one basic democratic procedure. However, in two important regards, the election was not fair.

First, during the campaign the Yeltsin team abused its extensive control of the media to bias them heavily, national television in particular, in favor of the President and against Mr. Zyuganov. They did this in terms both of who got air time and of who received favorable or critical commentary.

Not surprisingly then, the European Institute for the Media, which studied and quantified media coverage from May 5th through July 3rd, concluded that the coverage, "marred the fairness of the democratic process." [From the newspaper, *Moscow Times,* an article entitled, "Poll Observers Blast Media Bias."] Other election monitoring groups downplayed this bias with the dubious claim that it was justified by the threat of a Communist victory.

Second, the Yeltsin team grossly violated the campaign expenditure limit of $3 million for each side. Zyuganov appears to have observed it. The Washington Post investigated this issue carefully and reported on July 7th. The lowest estimate given to the reporters was, and it was given by members of Mr. Yeltsin's own team, that Yeltsin's spending—the lowest estimate was $100 million. However, the article went on, "Russian journalists and sources close to the campaign have said the minimum figure is closer to $500 million and possibly a good deal more."

I think if Mr. Talbott found that his opponent in an election, say a Mr. X, had violated the expenditure law by 17,000 percent, and Mr. X had also abused his powers in order to bias the media against Mr. Talbott, Mr. Talbott would, of course, not say that everyone acknowledges the election to be fair. Why Mr. Talbott claimed this in the analogous Russian case is to me a mystery.

No one can say, of course, how many votes Mr. Yeltsin gained from assets that Zyuganov did not have, i.e., buying television coverage and a blitz of high-quality advertising on TV and billboards all over Russia. But these may have turned what would have been a fairly even race into the 53 to 40 percent result in Yeltsin's favor. Zyuganov, not surprisingly, claimed that these robbed him of victory.

The reason the Communists have evidently decided not to challenge the outcome in court on these grounds may be Zyuganov's ambivalence about winning the election at all. He saw daunting political risk in having to rule a Russia that is poised on the edge of a financial and economic crisis. I have developed this theme in an article that I would like to ask the Commission to insert in the record, an op-ed from *The New York Times* that has been distributed outside——

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, it will be made a part of the record.

Mr. REDDAWAY. Thank you. Why was the election not a triumph to democracy? Clearly an unfair election, however orderly, cannot be a triumph to democracy. It creates disillusion with democracy and not only on the losing side. Those wavering voters who were persuaded to vote for Yeltsin only by media bias and his blanket advertising campaign are likely to feel disillusioned if they become aware of the unfairness, and also if Yeltsin's extravagant election promises are not fulfilled.

Likewise, voters who supported Yeltsin only because he suddenly made Lebed his partner will feel tricked if, as seems quite likely, before long he pushes Mr. Lebed aside and abandons policies Mr. Lebed favored. These voters are bound to believe that Yeltsin promoted Lebed only to get himself reelected, and therefore he was guilty of a sort of false advertising.

The claims by Western optimists that the election was a triumph for democracy hold, at least implicitly, that Yeltsin nurtured a young democracy for several years, focused his electoral appeal on promoting it, and thus its prospects are now, despite certain problems of the sort that Mr. McFaul started to list, better than ever. Unfortunately, I believe this interpretation to be wrong.

My view is that Yeltsin has drifted toward authoritarianism since 1993, and the election just now will only confirm this trend. This view derives from my attempt to set up criteria for democratic development, to see how Russia matches up to them, and to measure whether the trends are in the direction of more or of less democracy. In general, in my view, Yeltsin has undermined, not nurtured, democracy.

In recent months, for example, he repeatedly indicated that he was listening to his hard-line advisors and might follow their publicly stated advice to find a pretext to cancel the election. In March, fearing he would lose to Zyuganov, he ordered decrees drawn up that would have canceled the election, closed down the parliament, and banned the Communist Party.

On the night of March 17–18, security forces combed the parliament building to make sure that unlike in October 1993 when Mr. Yeltsin last abolished the legislature in Russia with tanks and 150 deaths, no deputies were inside. Only when his more cautious

advisors declined to go along did Mr. Yeltsin, on March the 18th, back off.

In the campaign itself, Mr. Yeltsin said almost nothing about how he would develop democracy. With much justification, he blasted the Communists. He claimed that he was bringing Russia out of its economic depression and would care for those who had suffered from it. He handed out pork by the ton. He said he would restore order and also end the Chechnya war. But he did not address the ills of Russian democracy, evidently because he does not intend to address them.

He did not, for example, promise to reverse the growing disregard for human rights by his own government which had caused his advisor on human rights, Sergei Kovalev, to resign in protest last February. Likewise, he did not put forward a program for building up the independence of Russia's intimidated judiciary and thus reverse the discouraging trend that has led key liberals among his legal advisors to resign like Mr. Kovalev.

He did not say he was going to defend Russia's battered rule of law by countering the dangerous trend of the country's 89 administrative units to set their own laws and regulations without regard to Federal legislation. He did not lay out, to the business world, how he would combat organized crime so that it would then be able to stop making its regular payments to the Mafia.

He did not promise either to reduce the excessive powers and size of his Presidential administration and the bloated executive branch as a whole, or to strengthen the legislature, measures that most constitutional experts consider necessary if democracy is to develop. He did not regret the lack of accountability of himself and his administration to the Duma and the public, nor promise to do better in the future.

He did not announce ways of strengthening the country's weak, mostly nominal political parties so that democracy and Russia's pitifully weak civil society—and I agree with what Mr. McFaul said on this—could be strengthened. He did not regret the bias of the media and the widespread bribing of journalists to write favorable articles about himself or, in some cases, Mr. Zyuganov, and promise to reverse the trend toward lessened autonomy for the media.

Thus, Mr. Yeltsin did not promise, except in vague, formal rhetoric, that he would push to strengthen democracy. On the contrary, by aligning himself with Lebed, a self-described semi-democrat, by stressing his own czar-like qualities, by featuring nationalist themes and the restoration of order, Mr. Yeltsin suggested that he was set on continuing to move gradually toward authoritarianism.

This, indeed, was the conclusion of Russia's leading democrat, Sergei Kovalev, who predicted that under a Yeltsin/Lebed alliance, Russia would quickly cease to be a state based upon law and would instead "be governed in a draconian manner." It may be that Mr. Yeltsin will now try to combine creeping authoritarianism in politics with a new push for market reform, a la General Pinochet of Chile in the 1970's.

But the rise of the consolidated budget deficit to 11.8 percent of GDP in April compared to the IMF's limit of 3.85 percent for 1996, and the specter of recently controlled inflation taking off again and perhaps reaching 10 percent a month do not bode well for economic

stability. Also, a serious economic crisis, which some observers predict for the fall, could easily set off social unrest, especially if increases in inflation, unemployment, and non-payment of wages all should occur at the same time.

The other potential catalyst for instability in Russia is Mr. Yeltsin's weak health. If he is incapacitated or dies and still no obvious successor is in sight, a destabilizing struggle for the succession seems almost inevitable with a possible abandonment of constitutional methods and resort to coup-type procedures.

Thus, in my view, that of someone no doubt considered a "doomsayer" by Messrs. Talbott, McFaul, and others, Russia has not experienced a "tremendous victory for democracy." The election was orderly and has temporarily resolved some uncertainties, but the results should, I believe, be summarized like this. A very unpopular President, having seriously considered through March 17, flouting democracy and canceling the election, managed to be reelected through the successful but negative strategy of branding his opponent Zyuganov as a backward looking representative of the Communist past.

He was remarkably lucky that Zyuganov ran an inept campaign and allowed the strategy to succeed. Mr. Yeltsin cheated in the campaign by grossly violating legal spending limits and by manipulating the media. He said little about his programs for the future, but very few indications suggest that he has any real concern for democratic reform and very many suggestions indicate an intention to continue on his previous course of creeping authoritarianism.

For the near future, then, Russia seems headed, alas, toward authoritarianism and probably continuing political and economic instability.

My footnote, which I will not read out, simply explains that assuming that I may be considered to be among the so-called doomsayers, I have not, in fact, said the things that the doomsayers are claimed to have said, but I will not burden you with that footnote. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Professor. You've raised a number of very important points and I do appreciate your very fine testimony. Dr. Ruble.

Mr. HOYER. Dr. Ruble will now say the two previous speakers were both right.

STATEMENT OF BLAIR RUBLE

Dr. RUBLE. That's right. But before I say that, I'd like to thank the Commission and the chairman for holding these hearings. It's certainly an honor to be here. I have submitted a written statement and would like to move on.

Mr. SMITH. We're pleased to make it a part of the record.

Dr. RUBLE. Before I move on to saying that both the previous speakers were correct, I would like to applaud Mr. Smith for his opening statement about Sergei Kovalev. Mr. Kovalev is one of those remarkable human beings that Russia somehow produces from time to time, and I think it's very important that our prayers are with him and that we wish him well. I'm very pleased that you began, sir, the hearing that way.

Mr. HOYER. Doctor, if you would yield just for a second, I was late as you observed, and did not hear the comments, nor had I heard of Dr. Kovalev's heart attack, about which I had just been advised. As someone who has had the opportunity of meeting with Dr. Kovalev in Moscow on a number of occasions in a number of roles that he has played both in and out of the government, I share your view and, Mr. Chairman, I share yours. He is indeed a giant voice on behalf of human rights and democracy in Russia. It is indeed a sad thing that he has been stricken, and all of us join in what you have said, Frank, in praying for his quick and full recovery.

Mr. WOLF. How serious was it?

Mr. SMITH. The word that I got yesterday was that it was very serious.

Dr. MCFAUL. I called folks that work with him last night. It's very serious and it's a real crisis. This is the last champion of human rights, and the human rights community in Moscow, last night, anyway, was in a real state of shock.

Mr. REDDAWAY. Not the last champion. Another is Elena Bonner.

Mr. HOYER. Doctor, I was going to say Dr. Bonner. I have talked to a lot of people in Moscow who I would say are very strong proponents of human rights. Dr. Bonner is as famous, if not more famous, certainly with the world than Mr. Kovalev; however, sometimes we think that there is only one person who carries the mantle. Having said that, Mr. Kovalev has been a giant. His illness is a blow and extremely sad. Hopefully he will recover. Excuse me, Doctor. Thank you.

Dr. RUBLE. Well, George F. Kennan once counseled that when confronted with two contradictory statements about Russia, you should always assume that both are correct. As is frequently the case when Professor Kennan speaks of Russia, I think,, that his words are worth heeding. This is a time when statements about Russia and Russian reform are certainly contradictory, as we've just heard.

On the one hand, the Presidential elections on July 3rd represent a great victory for reform and democracy, a triumph for democracy. Yet, at the same time, the Presidential elections changed little and Russia is on the verge of catastrophic collapse. Both statements have a certain ring of truth. The issue is not merely a debate over whether the proverbial glass of water is half full or half empty. One side sees the water level of democracy and market reform rising even if it's only one-quarter full.The other side is arguing something different. It argues that there are so many cracks and holes in the glass that it won't hold water no matter how much you pour in. It argues that Russia is not going to complete the transition to democracy or perhaps even to a market economy. Both sides look at different aspects of Russian reality.

Those who see the Presidential elections as a great victory for democracy emphasize, we've heard today, the apparent procedural correctness of the balloting and the defeat of the Communists. Skeptics highlight the closing off of press coverage which, voluntary or not, hardly points in the direction of a free and open election fairly fought.

The odd disappearance of Boris Yeltsin in the campaign's closing days, the uncertain relationship between General Lebed and the President's men, the quasi-coup against the hard-liners in the Presidential administration following the first round all underscore the weakness of democratic institutions and traditions. We've just heard this debate played out by my colleagues.

To my mind, this debate reflects very interesting parallel developments of mass electoral politics and chamber elite struggles surrounding the President. This parallel development has been one of the most fascinating aspects of post-Soviet Russian politics and one of the hardest to get a handle on.

It might be worth our while to brush up on American political science theory to understand the first development, mass electoral politics, while Stanford University historian Nancy Shields Kollmann's study of 14th, 15th and 16th century Muscovite clan politics seems closer to the mark when looking at the second development: chamber elite struggles.

As Kollmann's work on medieval Russia demonstrates, the battles within the Kremlin walls are not merely personal disputes—struggles among advisors for the imperial ear, as one might see in other national capitals. Rather, these are brutal battles which represent the clashing of almost primordial interests that are played out through the selection of personnel for pivotal Kremlin positions.

The internal Kremlin wars have been quite literally struggles to the death for centuries. The post-Soviet period is remarkable because the participants of these never-ending Kremlin battles have figured out how to use electoral mass politics as yet another tool in their repertoire in these struggles.

As has been pointed out, the recent elections were not a clash among political parties. They really represented in public forum, in mass forum, disputes that are taking place within the Kremlin walls. Such a perspective suggests that we are not seeing the emergence of democracy so much as the playing out of clan politics in another forum.

Having said that, we also have to recognize that the world does change. The future is seldom identical to the past. Elections have a way of taking on their own meaning. Whatever the Kremlin oligarchs may want, Russians have voted and voted often over the past 7 years. The 67 percent turn-out on July 3rd will undoubtedly make our turn-out look paltry when we get to November and our own Presidential elections.

With each election, even if it is arguably a flawed election, Russia's democratic roots grow that much deeper into the soil. Russian democracy is both a hardy and a fragile plant and in this sense, both the optimists and pessimists are right. But we have to begin to ask what is necessary for democracy to take further root. What has to happen if it will be possible to look back 5, 10, 100 years from now to July 3, 1996 and say yes, that was a good day for Russian democracy.

What has to happen is that a dense net of stable institutions must arise which will cover over all the cracks and holes in the democratic water glass. The next stage in the drama of Russian reform will be whether or not institutions such as political parties will indeed emerge, as optimists such as Professor McFaul has sug-

gested, or will the efforts to the contrary, as we've heard from Professor Reddaway, end up holding sway.

For the optimists to be correct, Boris Yeltsin is going to have to do something that he has never done before. He's going to have to govern. Yeltsin has remarkable, even super-human capacity, to rally his forces in times of crisis. Institution-building, however, is about a longer-term commitment to governance, to the nitty-gritty of everyday public administration and politics, with a small "p."

We presently have a situation that is, if anything, more dangerous than a year ago. Russia would appear to have a partially incapacitated President with authoritarian inclinations; a prime minister and a national security advisor at odds with one another, at various times both claiming to be the second most powerful person in the country; as we've heard from Professor Reddaway, a looming economic crisis; a disaffected 40 percent of the electorate, nearly 30 million politically aware adults, who were willing to vote for the Communists and are concentrated in specific geographic areas; and a group of foreign supporters of reform who can easily serve as flashpoints for popular anger.

On top of this, we have the Lebed wild card. The problem here is not that we don't know retired Lieutenant General Aleksandr Lebed. The issue is really of his inexperience, his inexperience in the political games which he must now play without delay; and we can't know how quickly he's going to learn and make the transition to a Kremlin insider.

Now, the problems run far deeper than President Yeltsin and General Lebed. The issue at hand is really not the nature of the Russian people. I fully concur with Professor McFaul when he pointed out that the Russian people have demonstrated an inspiring commitment to democracy and they've done so over and over again during the past decade. The problem isn't the Russian people. The problem is the Russian political elite.Earlier this week, Polish President Aleksandr Kwasniewski, speaking at a session organized by the World Affairs Council and the Atlantic Council here in Washington, was asked to clarify his campaign slogan of a common Poland. President Kwasniewski's response shed considerable light on the difference between the Polish and Russia post-socialist transitions.

The Polish President explained that despite often sharp disagreements over public policy issues such as abortion, every Polish politician understands that Poland has before it perhaps the best moment in 4 to 5 centuries to join the community of democratic and prosperous nations. One would have to search long and hard to find a Russian politician who has managed to elevate such a concept of personal responsibility to fellow Russians above the petty power politics of the old Stalinist game of "kto kogo," who over whom.

Neither the reformers nor the Communists in Russia appear able to step beyond the most immediate political fray to seize the historical moment. Michael McFaul speaks of a culture of reconciliation that we've seen after the elections. President Yeltsin's conciliatory victory speech, and evidently a speech he made today, are certainly gestures in this direction. This is a heartening sign. It shows that perhaps President Yeltsin is ready to govern.

Yet, we have to note that President Yeltsin has made similar speeches before; and yet his behavior and especially the actions of those around him demonstrates a reluctance bordering on incapacity to step above petty politics. The new institutions so lacking in Russia that must eventually cover the cracks in the glass of democracy cannot develop until and unless the Russian political elite demonstrates not just strategic prowess but genuine wisdom.

Now, that might be putting the bar awfully high, but that is where the bar sits at a historic moment. We, for our part, need not forget that the fire is not out. We should be pleased that the elections went as well as they did. We should be pleased that they were held. But we shouldn't delude ourselves into thinking that everything is under control.

Russians must do more to control the flames of authoritarianism and totalitarianism and intolerance before we can begin to be assured that Russia is indeed joining the community of democratic market-oriented nations. This does not mean that the elections have been a useless exercise. On the whole, they have advanced the process of Russian democratization, as by the way, did the December 1995 parliamentary elections, despite the rather different outcome.

These recent elections demonstrate the heroic commitment to decency on the part of many Russians, perhaps a majority of the Russian people, a commitment not always evident among the leadership. This is not the time to bask in glory. It's a time to look forward. Russian politicians have before them serious hard work, the hard work of everyday governing and state-building.

Unfortunately, there's been little evidence to date to suggest that President Yeltsin either has an interest or capacity in governing, in building a state. Let's hope in this sense that the pessimists are wrong and that the optimists are right and that President Yeltsin and his fellow politicians will get on with the task that's before them. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Again, thank you very much, Dr. Ruble, for your very excellent testimony. Mr. Salmon and I will have to leave shortly for a mark-up on the NATO expansion legislation that's before the International Relations Committee, and Mr. Wolf has agreed to assume the chair. I have just a couple of questions and then Mr. Salmon, I think, has one or two. Steny, can you stay?

Mr. HOYER. I must leave at 3:00 o'clock. I have an appointment.

Mr. SMITH. Just to be very brief then, you mentioned Kwasniewski's election. I followed that—I think we all followed that—somewhat closely in Poland. It seemed to be a victory of a very attractive candidate and a very attractive team, he and his wife utilizing the modern-day techniques, especially television; which Yeltsin apparently has done rather well, too, in the closing hours of his campaign.

Sometimes I wonder if it's more of a reflection of perception than the deepest feelings and yearnings of people either of Poland or of Russia. They were fed a certain message by the mass media, particularly television, and we know even with our own elections that polling sometimes shows that there's not as much as depth as all of us would like as to why people vote the way they do.

They see an image, they like the image, and Zyuganov certainly didn't have the same persona that the Polish President had and could not project that youthful figure, almost Kennedy-like appearance. I wonder at the impact it had. When it comes to human rights, again, what would be your recommendations to the Congress, to the Commission, and to the President, above all, as chief policy implementer of foreign policy to project the seriousness within which we regard human rights? Because again, the record on many countries, especially the PRC, has been atrocious.

Dr. RUBLE. If I may begin quickly, I think we're, in a way, very fortunate that Polish Communists and Russian Communists are not the same. I think had the Russian Communist Party reinvigorated itself and come to terms with its previous defeat as the Polish Communist Party did, we could be talking about a Zyuganov victory, but Zyuganov—it's a difference between perhaps neo-communists and paleo-communists. The Russian Communists have not reformed, the Polish Communists did, and I think that does reflect an important difference.

I would add that, of course, media made a difference; but I think over the past decade, and here I would certainly agree with Mr. McFaul's previous comments, the Russian people have demonstrated over and over again their commitment to voting. They've gone out in large numbers, they've voted from 1989 on, and I think that we need to begin to recognize that yes, they like to sit at home and watch soap operas, as do people in many parts of the world, but they did go out and they do vote and I think that in that way, there's a very heartening commitment to democratic process, and I think that that's important.

Dr. MCFAUL. If I could just add two things? First, on the Communists in Russia versus Poland, the vote that we just witnessed was the vote that Poland had 5 years ago; that is, once Poland had decided what kind of system they were going to be in, which was democratic and capitalist, then elections after that are about left of center, right of center.

Russia, for a variety of mistakes, I think, that Boris Yeltsin made, he didn't have elections in the fall of 1991, he didn't adopt a new constitution, and as a result of those things, parties didn't develop; and you had this polarized electoral system which this, I think, will be the last one.

Secondly, in terms of the media, we have produced an 800-page book at the Carnegie Endowment on electoral behavior from 1989 to 1996. What's very obvious from that book is that voting behavior in Russia has remained very stable for the last 7 years. It's not all over the place. Fifty percent of the electorate didn't change their mind between December 1995 and June 1996.

On the contrary, almost 75 percent of the voters knew who they were going to vote for in January, well before this media campaign happened. Sound familiar to you guys? Then there's the middle and that is where, you know, that is where I do think the media came in, but it didn't change voters' minds in Bryansk, where they voted for Communists in '89, they voted for them in '90, '91, '93, '95 and '96. It didn't change the voters' minds in Moscow where they voted for reformists in '90, et cetera, and so this notion that somehow the

Russians don't understand the choice, that they've been duped by some sort of media blitz is just absolutely false.

Third, on human rights, I think it's very obvious what needs to be done. I heard it in this committee already. We need to have a voice—America needs to be a voice for human rights. We don't need to be comparing Chechnya to the Civil War. That is terrible for the Russians on the ground. That is where the mistake is made. It doesn't matter to Boris Yeltsin, but the Russians, that's what they hear.

Second, we can do it in a very concrete way. Mr. Kovalev, you all know him, I know him, I just saw him a week ago. I know his colleagues well; I've worked with them for a decade. They used to be part of the administration, right? They used to have a place to sit. They used to have financial resources from the state. They no longer do. I know exactly where I would start if I was going to be developing human rights in Russia.

Mr. REDDAWAY. A very brief comment. Up to now, it seems to me that our administration has hesitated to speak out strongly on human rights issues because we have been afraid that we would undermine Mr. Yeltsin and this might let the Communists back into power. Just, of course, a very condensed summary. I think this has been a bad policy from the start.

I thoroughly felt with Mr. Wolf as he let his feelings out about Chechnya. I think it is correct to formulate that the United States has had a strong indirect moral responsibility for partial genocide in Chechnya. Those are rather strong words, but they're not chosen lightly, and I wrote about this in the *New York Times.* [April 3, 1996]

So I hope from now on, with Mr. Yeltsin now reelected and with the Communists unlikely to pose a serious political challenge in the near future, perhaps never again in terms of ruling Russia, that we can at least speak out properly on human rights, and I agree with Mr. Wolf. Nothing of any serious strength was said at any high levels by the United States administration.

Of course, there were a few spokesmen speaking out at low levels quietly, but that doesn't count. The Russian Government knows that is insignificant and doesn't count for anything. It's only when Mr. Clinton and Mr. Christopher, Mr. Talbott and others speak out and when they hold out the prospect that there will be something, there will be a price to pay for continuing partial genocide in Chechnya.

Mr. SMITH. Those words, I think, should also be directed to the vice President as he brings that message to Russia.

Mr. REDDAWAY. Indeed, indeed.

Mr. SMITH. Trade investment, fine, but human rights has to be at the core of it, because I think you're right. I think your point is well-taken about this being a time when the elections are over now. If they were inhibited before, there is no reason to have a bridle in the mouth. Speak out loudly and boldly on behalf of human rights.

Mr. HOYER. I must go. Matt, you can stay for a few minutes? Let me say that I don't have any questions at the time, although a number of questions were raised by your testimony. I remember, Professor, when you, Marshall Goldman, and others testified at

hearings that I convened with reference to the Gorbachev presidency and the Gorbachev future. I remember the testimony of you both and others who said that Gorbachev undoubtedly could not last.

As one who had met with Mr. Gorbachev in 1987 and on a number of other occasions, particularly for a relatively extensive period of time with Speaker Wright and Bob Michel, I thought Gorbachev was an extraordinarily able politician. However, seeing that he has zero support effectively at this point in time, I am more taken with the testimony of the three of you and I have read Dr. Ruble's testimony. I think you are all correct in your assessment.

I agree with Dr. Ruble that if the three of you got together, you probably could come up with a consensus because although it seems, Professor Reddaway, that there may be more disparity between you and Dr. McFaul, I think it is more apparent than real in the sense that we are dealing with an extraordinarily complicated transition.

But let me say something on behalf of the U.S. voters. If, for the first time in 1,000 years, the citizens of the United States were asked to vote for their President, I guarantee you more than 70 percent of them would show up. I think that one of the reasons U.S. citizens probably don't vote in as high a percentage as some other countries is because in many ways they are very satisfied with the stability of the Government and the democracy that they have.

I make that comment only because we tend to say, "Well, look at the other guys." America—again, Netanyahu said today—is the example in the world of what democracy ought to be, even though perhaps we don't hit 70, 75, 80 percent voting on a regular basis. I think that is because so many Americans believe their votes don't make a difference. But, if they thought it was really bad, they would be there.

I think all three of you gave excellent testimony. I very much appreciate it. Thanks to our chairman for convening this hearing. Thank you very much.

Mr. WOLF. Go ahead. You have to get going.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MATT SALMON

Mr. SALMON. Thanks a lot, Frank. I have a couple of comments. I, with Mr. Hoyer, was fortunate enough to go to Stockholm for the last week to participate in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly annual conference. It was very productive.

One of the things that I noted was, as we went into the plenary session and we started to debate, a very simple straight-forward measure on statement of purpose about Bosnia, about prosecuting the war criminals, we heard a very inflammatory rebuttal to, I think, a pretty modest, timid- proposal from the international community regarding the Bosnia peace process from Mr. Zhirinovsky, who I'm sure we'd all recognize as somewhat of an outlier, that he doesn't represent the mainstream of Russia. He didn't do exceptionally well in his bid for the top spot.

However, he is in a position of authority being elected to their legislature. He seemed to take some very strident positions saying hands off when it comes to dealing with any other nation, simple

straight-forward comments about the ethnic cleansing and that should stop. He even opposed that.

Needless to say, I guess in summary, he was seen as very radical in his presentation. It was commented by some that he kind of looked around the room and figured out, is there anybody I haven't offended yet? If so, I'm not through. That kind of seemed to be his tone.

Now, I mention that because I know that he's not in a position of great authority in Russia right now, but there is a man that is in a position of great authority that I don't think is far behind in his extremism and that's Mr. Lebed. I am a member of the Mormon religion and was deeply offended at his comments a couple of weeks ago calling members of my religion "scum" and his anti-Semitic comments as well.

If that's the kind of person that is either next in line or next to next in line to be in the top spot, I think we in America have great reason to fear a man with such a small mind making small-minded comments; and, frankly, as a member of Congress looking to propose financial aid and assistance to Russia as they try to pursue some of the economic reforms and political reforms, it would be wise, somehow, for Mr. Yeltsin to get a clue that his No. 2 guy, secretary of security, ought to think before he speaks in the future or there will be a great hesitancy in this country to help out. When the time comes to help out, he'll look around, and he will have offended everybody.

I want your comments. I know Lebed has since recanted what he said. It was extremely stupid of him to say those remarks in the first place. You don't say remarks like that unless you think them. He may have retracted his comments because it was politically expedient to do so, but in his heart what does he believe? Is he a bigot? Is he the kind of a guy that is going to try to take Russia two steps back when it comes to religious freedom? I'm interested in your comments.

Mr. REDDAWAY. Well, let me go first. On the first part about Mr. Zhirinovsky—let me get him out of the way and go on to Lebed—he did get between 5 and 6 percent of the vote in the first round for the Presidential election. His support is very much down in Russia from what it was in the past. I think he's a fading star, if you can call him a star.

What I want to say, though, is that in recent months Russian journalists and scholars have started to write articles about Mr. Zhirinovsky with which I am very inclined to agree, that he is not actually a representative of Russian public opinion, of a limited section of Russian public opinion; he is, to use their terminology, a scarecrow created and largely financed by the Government. This is a perplexing statement, and these articles explain how this is the case. Mr. Zhirinovsky was launched on the political scene in Russia in 1990 by the KGB, the old KGB, and the purpose then was a particular purpose. Under Mr. Yeltsin, he appears to have continued in this role. The purpose is to scare the West about the forces of extreme nationalism allegedly about to take over in Russia unless we in the West support the democrats.

That is the analysis which is now based on a lot of very detailed, factual material, and it's interesting that none of the articles writ-

ten saying this have been refuted by anybody. So Mr. Zhirinovsky comes to the Stockholm conference. He speaks in this outrageous way. This is the fifth or sixth time that he's done this in the last 2 or 3 years. The West thinks, "Oh, gracious, there are terrible, terrible forces in Russia—extreme nationalism, fascism—we must support Mr. Yeltsin and help him hold back that tide." Well, that tide, fortunately, I think, does not exist in Russia. It only exists on a very small scale. So we don't need to be too worried about it now.

Turning to Mr. Lebed, here I think we have somewhat more to be worried about, although again I'm not as worried, I think, perhaps as you are. The reason I'm not so worried is not because I disagree with your characterization of him, but because I think he is in the process, probably, of self-destructing politically. I think he does not have the experience to survive and prosper in Russian politics in the Kremlin. He's in a very big fight already with the Prime Minister, Mr. Chernomyrdin. I think that Mr. Yeltsin, having used Lebed to get himself reelected, will now distance himself somewhat from him. He's already done that in one or two minor ways. So it would not surprise me if Mr. Lebed is eased aside in the future. certainly I would very much doubt him being the next in line.

Mr. SALMON. Professor Reddaway, I wanted to comment. As far as his political demise, I can guarantee you he's lost the Utah vote. [Laughter.]

Mr. REDDAWAY. Just one final comment. The danger is that, if Mr. Yeltsin should collapse or die in the near future and Mr. Lebed is still up there at the top, it is always, of course, possible he might make some sort of thrust for power. One can't rule out completely that he might conceivably succeed, but I think that's not terribly likely.

Dr. MCFAUL. If I could just add one remark, and then I'm going to have to go home, a place I haven't been for the last 2 months, two things on Mr. Zhirinovsky and Mr. Lebed.

First, Zhirinovsky is not done, unfortunately, and those kind of politicians in Russian will remain. Whether he fades, and I suspect he will, as a kind of politician, they're going to be around. That's all the more so why the absence of this party system that I was talking about is so desperately needed. Russia needs social democrats and liberals, not just populist extremists. Once you have a consolidated party system, that pushes extremists out.

Secondly, in terms of Mr. Lebed, I think the important thing to remember about him is that he's only been abroad once. It was to Afghanistan. You know what he was doing there in his, you know, "junior year abroad." [Laughter.] He really has no exposure to the West whatsoever. This man is a tabula rasa. I know his campaign advisors well. They report Lebed doesn't know anything about anything outside of the military. Twenty-five years in the military does not train you to be the kind of leader that he is.

That's the first point. The second—so there are two solutions to that. One is every time he says a stupid thing he has to be criticized. It was a stupid thing, and he didn't even know what he was saying. He's that naive, that stupid frankly, as a politician. Every time he says that you have to criticize it and say, you know, "You can't say that kind of stuff."

Two, I would encourage you to invite him to Salt Lake City. I really do. I sincerely believe that. That's the best way. Ignorance is the biggest danger we have with Russia. Once he knows something about the Church that he was criticizing, once he knows what America is, I think his views on America and religion could be changed, because he really is a tabula rasa. He's a clean slate.

Third, and then most dangerously, however, is that he is a man who has no allies. I totally agree it's a very dangerous situation for him. They're already pushing him out. But that scares me even more, because then Lebed becomes Boris Yeltsin from 1989. Then he becomes a guy that got 11 million voters. He's got a political mandate. You guys know what that is, too, right? He has people that voted for him to do something in the Kremlin, and if he then goes and says, "Well, I have to resign because I came here to fight crime and corruption, and, guess what, the criminal and the corrupt have pushed me out," he becomes the leader of the opposition; and that, to me, is a real recipe for disaster in Russia.

Thank you very much. Really thank you for having me here.

Dr. RUBLE. If I can add a few very quick comments, I think Michael is exactly correct about Zhirinovsky, that he himself may be eclipsed, but we will see other politicians like him, because unfortunately there is an intolerance in Russian society which politicians like Zhirinovsky represent.

Lebed is a different issue from Zhirinovsky, although perhaps a less happy one. General Lebed is not a clown, and I think we have to take him very seriously. I don't care how uninitiated he is in civilized behavior, those statements reflect inner views which should be reprehensible in any national political leader in any society. So I don't think we can simply say, well, he didn't know any better.

Having said that, there is a problem with General Lebed. He hasn't been to the outside—to the West. We were involved in an invitation which he had accepted to come to the United States 18 months ago, and the business funders were led to believe that their business opportunities in Russia would be closed off if they sponsored the trip, so they withdrew it. We tried to find foundation support, and a number of the leading foundations in this country in leading cities like New York, Chicago and Washington, all said, "Well, why should we fund this guy? He's not going anywhere." So the trip fell apart. There was interest in a number of places in Washington, and he had accepted the invitation and even held a press conference announcing that he had accepted this invitation. I think in retrospect it's very unfortunate he wasn't exposed to the United States.

The pressure, as we understood it, although we were dealing with business sponsors indirectly, came from the Presidential administration in Russia; and it was made very clear to them that, if General Lebed came under their auspices, they would lose business opportunities. I think that was a very short-sighted development.

I think it is the case that General Lebed, because he hasn't been exposed to the outside world, perhaps there is a modicum of hope that he will grow in the job. He's not going to have a lot of time to do a lot of learning. He's going to have to be a very quick learner. But he potentially has a lot of power, and I would counsel

against simply writing him as the next Zhirinovsky. This is, from the United States' point of view, potentially a very dangerous man.

Mr. SALMON. I have to go.

Mr. WOLF. Sure, I understand.

I have a couple of questions. One, let me thank you for your testimony. I have picked up a lot. I'm sorry—is there a representative of Ambassador Collins from the State Department here? You know, they really should have stayed. They don't really know it all, and I think it would have been helpful.

Secondly, I've spoken to Chairman Smith and Mr. Hoyer's staff, and we will do a letter and call over today asking that the administration send a cardiologist from Bethesda or Walter Reed over to examine Kovalev, to see if there is something that can be done, if he can be moved to an American hospital. If you know the administration people very well—if you know Ambassador Collins, you may want to call over there, too. Because I think that would be helpful.

The two other questions that I would have, and I didn't know that I was going to have all this time, so I didn't prepare a lot of questions, but based on your comments—one was Lebed—did you think he was next in line? I think you've answered that.

If you could elaborate a little bit more on the Chechnya thing. I went to Chechnya last year. We went down into Ingushetia, and then we went in. We went through Grozny, and we saw Russian soldiers. We stopped at checkpoints. We weren't with anybody from the military or the government. We were by ourselves. The soldiers were drinking beer. They had bandanas on. They almost looked like pirates in some respects. They were wearing sneakers. We talked to them. They didn't know I was a Congressman. We just kind of chatted. We had an interpreter there. They were very afraid. At nighttime when it's dark they all just hunker down in their bunkers.

We went into the village of Shamaski, where we talked to a number of the residents there, and they told us of the Russian soldiers coming in injecting morphine in their veins with fruit juice. The schools destroyed. We walked through the village and saw homes where they threw hand grenades into the basement. But as we talked to the Russian soldiers, they were afraid, and they were all anxious to get out of there.

Secondly, there was a lot of stealing going on. The indication was that they were given the ability to take whatever they wanted to take as part of their payment.

What do you think the U.S. policy should be? Is there any merit? What do we want from the OSCE office? They're good people and I could commend them, but they're not at the level that really have the opportunity to talk to the leadership of the Russian Government or of the others in the region.

Would it make sense for the administration to offer? They may very well turn it down, but to offer, whether it be a retired general, a General Vessey or somebody like that to go over not necessarily to be the intermediary, but to begin to kind of bring them together or to offer some cooperation? That's what I'd like you to comment on.

Second, would it be your guess now that the elections are over and I know the administration was reluctant to say anything criti-

cal because they didn't want to do anything to harm Yeltsin's re-election—now that Yeltsin has been reelected, is it your feeling that the war in Chechnya will increase or will peter out?

Dr. RUBLE. I fear—I have not been to Chechnya. I haven't had your experiences, so I'm speaking from the distance, but I don't simply see how this conflict can be turned on and off. It's a conflict that began long before the latest outbreak, and I don't see any simple solution. I think it's not a bad idea for the United States to try to offer our good offices and to get involved in negotiations, particularly if we can find an appropriate person who is acceptable to both sides. But I'm very skeptical that this—it's been referred to as partial genocide and that's exactly what it is and it can't simply be swept under the rug.

There are a number of disturbing things about the administration's position on Chechnya. Certainly the comparisons by the President with the American Civil War are outrageous, and it is beyond my comprehension how those statements could have been made.

Secondly, it's not simply that the administration has been waiting until after the elections to raise the issue. There has been a willful denial of the importance of Chechnya from the very beginning. There's been an effort to try to put it in a box and put it away. I'm speaking personally here. I want to make that clear. I'm not speaking at this moment on behalf of my institution.

I have been very disturbed by how we have squandered our moral capital in the former Soviet Union and the former socialist world over the past 5 years under both administrations, but this administration certainly has never understood that the values which the United States stands for had real meaning in that part of the world to people. It may not have had meaning to the people in the Kremlin, but it had meaning to the people on the streets.

By denying the importance of our values in our statements about incidents like Chechnya, we've done a great disservice to ourselves and to Russia.

Mr. REDDAWAY. I would like to add to what Dr. Ruble has so eloquently said because I have similarly strong feelings. It may be preaching to the converted when we talk to each other on this issue. But to respond to some of your particular questions, I think it's uncertain whether the Chechnya war will go on indefinitely or whether there is now an opportunity to try to move toward a solution, toward some sort of settlement.

At the very least, there may be an opportunity; therefore, we need to try to seize it, try and help, try and help it along. Part of the opportunity, oddly enough, lies in the man we've been criticizing in the last couple of hours on and off, Mr. Lebed. Mr. Lebed has repeatedly stated that, first of all, the war was a mistake in the first place.

Recently, he has, even since he was elevated to his high position he has said, "We have got to talk to the Chechens, realizing that we may have to give them what they want, namely secession from the Russian Federation." He's said they're not probably going to survive very well if they secede, in which case they may come back to us, but he appears himself to be ready for secession.

Of course, part of the United States' disastrous position on this issue was that we said from the start that that was quite unthinkable because we made this false analogy with the American Civil War. So if we can perhaps build on what may be an increasing readiness within the Yeltsin administration to regard secession as a possibility, then I think we should try to take that chance.

How to do it? I think, the idea of the United States offering a sort of mediator/coordinator may not work very well. The problem is that the United States in Chechnya is seen as a very compromised party. We have supported—our Government has supported Mr. Yeltsin, strongly supported him in the first 2 weeks of the invasion in December 1994, one of the most shameful episodes in the history of American diplomacy.

Since then, we've backed off a little bit, but we're still strongly compromised in the eyes of the Chechen people. So we're not best placed to be an impartial mediator. I think it may be better to continue to operate through the OSCE mission there and build on that in trying to produce a new mediating or an accelerated mediating effort.

If those efforts fail and the Russian Government goes back to its policies of the last year-and-a-half, policies as you say only briefly interrupted for the visits of people like yourself when they pretend to be trying to solve the issue and then they start bombing as soon as you leave, if they do that again and revert to the policies that have predominated in the last year and a half, we have to speak out really loudly and we have to mobilize international organizations strongly.

The reason that this is a partial genocide is because most of the 40,000 people who have been killed are civilians, innocent civilians; and they have been killed, most of them, because the Russians have used blanket bombing, and blanket bombing is what the German planes did in Guernica in 1937, the last major atrocity of that sort in Europe, apart from one or two other parallels in World War II, but Guernica is a particularly vivid comparison, I think.

So if the Russian Government does revert, I hope you and others in the Commission and the Congress will really put pressure on President Clinton and the administration to speak out extremely strongly and to mobilize international organizations. That is what Russians will take account of, if they know that they're going to lose International Monetary Fund loans, loans from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and so on, if they continue with this barbaric genocidal policy in Chechnya. They'll stop; they'll stop quickly.

Mr. WOLF. Well, I appreciate your answer. I'm sorry that the Foreign Operations bill has passed the House. I serve on that committee. The idea did not come up with regard to cutting off aid to them. I've written the administration, and I'll send both of you copies of letter after letter after letter after letter, a friendly letter, but tough letter. I got the last letter back yesterday from the President and it just is more of the same.

I thought the Bosnia situation would not have been resolved had it not been for the United States involvement. Europe just didn't have the capacity, whether they did have it, but didn't have the will, and I thought if you were to pick someone who was not nec-

essarily in the administration, but somebody who had been, either like a General Vessey because it is a military-type thing, or perhaps Secretary Baker or somebody like that who would dedicate themselves, that that may be, because when we were there, the people did ask what's the position of the United States.

Now, this was last June, so we're almost a year ago: but they did ask over and over, what is the United States doing? What does the United States think? You could hear at nighttime the bombing of Bamut. Boom! Just bombing and bombing and bombing and bombing and bombing. A number of the people who have been killed are not only Chechens, but there are a number who are Russians that have been killed.

So let me share that with you, and I don't know how effective this Congress can be in mobilizing the world community because it just doesn't seem that the administration listens. We haven't had any kind of success, to be honest. Mr. Collins said he would look at it again. If you have any suggestions of anybody in the United States that you think may be appropriate, as you go and drive back today or tomorrow, I'd like to hear from you as to who you might think that we can try again. At least we are going to try again with Mr. Collins.

The last question I would have—and I have a number of others I've written down about human rights, and I think you've covered a lot of them—and that would be next in line, well, yes or no, I guess, but do you think there's a good chance that Lebed could be next in line? Because my next question that I'm going to ask you, the last question is, would you make a comment for the record with regard to Yeltsin's health?

He disappeared, and maybe you covered it before I came in. He had disappeared for that last 5 or 6 days. Was he just exhausted, as you can be exhausted in a campaign, or was it something more serious? Mr. McFaul said he does not think Mr. Yeltsin can finish his 4 years.

So will you make a comment on Mr. Yeltsin's health and then if the health situation is serious, and, of course, we just heard about the recent heart attack, could Mr. Lebed be next in line if something were to happen in a relatively short span, 3 to 6 months? So one, Mr. Yeltsin's health and what happened to him during that 5 days and anything you know about his health, and second, if something happened in the next short timeframe, would Mr. Lebed be close to being at the top.

Dr. RUBLE. I'd like to go back first to something you said about being in Chechnya and people asking you on the streets what is the American position, because I think that is very important, and it goes back to something that I said that people in this town seem not to care about. Even if all we did were to make public statements, that has meaning for people.

Mr. WOLF. If I could interrupt? You're exactly right. I'm sorry Chris isn't here. In 1988, Chris Smith and I visited Perm Camp 35 where Scharansky had been. We got into the camp, and we turned on a video camera—we have this all on film—and prisoner after prisoner came in. We said, "We're American Congressmen," and they went on a hunger strike. They went on a sit-down strike until they could talk to us.

These men who had been in Perm Camp 35 in the Ural Mountains knew of the position that President Reagan had taken with regard to human rights. They told us—they told us about President Reagan's speech where he called the Soviet Union the evil empire. Whether you agree with that speech or not, I happen to agree with it. They knew, and here they knew in an area that they don't sell Pravda or in downtown Perm. Camp 35. So you make a very good point. If men in that condition knew the position of the Reagan administration, you're exactly right.

Dr. RUBLE. Well, one of the lessons of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Communist empire that we seem not to take seriously is that ideas and values matter, and the history of the Helsinki Accords shows that. Yet, over and over again—and again, this is a bipartisan failing in both the Bush administration and Clinton administration. There's been no seeming appreciation of the fact that this is the case, but maybe I should continue.

I was talking to a former advisor of Mikhail Gorbachev, Aleksandr Tsipko, who was joking with me about how when he first raised the specter of a challenge from Boris Yeltsin, Gorbachev responded, "Well, he'll never live long enough." I don't know if that story is true or not, but Yeltsin's health record would seem to suggest that he's not going to complete his term in office, and yet he hasn't been a particularly healthy person for a long time.

I'm not prepared as yet to write him off. He does seem to have a super-human capacity to recover. I think it would be prudent, however, to begin to think about the succession and at this moment I would say that General Lebed probably hasn't learned the Moscow politics game well enough to succeed. But a lot depends on timing and circumstance of when the issue comes forward, and by that time, General Lebed may well have learned how to play the game. I think it would be prudent, not to be alarmist, but to begin to pay attention to what the general says he stands for.

Mr. REDDAWAY. Let me add a few comments. I would agree with Blair Ruble that it would be a mistake to view Mr. Yeltsin as already into a sort of irreversible decline in his health. He has bounced back several times over the last couple of years. Mr. McFaul said that nobody in Moscow—and he meets a lot of people in Moscow—believes that Yeltsin will complete his term, however.

So I give some weight to that because opinion in Moscow, some of the well-informed opinion, does get bits and pieces from doctors who got it from colleagues who know something about Yeltsin's health. Friends of mine who have come back recently from Moscow were talking with Yeltsin's people in Yeltsin's entourage.

They said that his latest collapse was a mixture of nervous depression following his result in the first round of the election; that he had kidded himself he was going to get over 50 percent in the first round, and when he got much less, he went into a sort of nervous depression; that was aggravated by his being maneuvered by Mr. Chubais and others into firing his very close buddies, particularly General Korzhakov, which was extremely painful to him.

Since I heard these reports, Mrs. Yeltsin has confirmed that and said that when Yeltsin had to dismiss Korzhakov and Borsukov and Soskovets—especially Korzhakov—it was as though one of his limbs had been cutoff, as though he's cutting off one of his own

limbs. So that appears to be part of it. Another part appears that he had some sort of chest pains which may be a recurrence in a relatively mild form this time of the heart trouble that he has had in the past, which they believe to be ischemia.

As regards Lebed's chances, I would go along with Dr. Ruble. Perhaps I'd be just a little bit more optimistic. I think Lebed's chances of thriving in the Kremlin are not good. He's capable of learning certain things, but he's not capable of changing his temperament, and I think his temperament is one that is not going to adjust to the Kremlin.

Also, I think that the so-called clans, the big financial and industrial interests which run Russia in many ways today and of which Mr. Chernomyrdin is one of the leaders, those clans are very worried about Mr. Lebed's appearance on the horizon and are already plotting to get rid of him, to push him aside, because if he means half of what he says about combatting organized crime, then the clans' interests would be very quickly, seriously affected.

These clans, in large measure, make up what the Russians call the mafia, organized crime, corrupt officialdom, working together in very mysterious but powerful ways; and Mr. Lebed has said he's serious about dealing with this issue. So I don't think the people in the Kremlin who are very closely connected to these clans will want Mr. Lebed to dig in and to entrench himself. I think they will probably find ways of easing him out.

But as Dr. Ruble said, it's always possible that you might have an extraordinary combination of circumstances with Yeltsin suddenly, his health collapsing, Lebed still being high up, military units perhaps being mobilized on Lebed's side since he has a lot of support in the military, the constitution is thrown out of the window. That sort of thing cannot be completely ruled out in Russia, because the quasi-constitutional procedures have extremely shallow roots.

Finally, on the question of the immediate, coming back to the immediate question again, I think I would encourage you and others to look for a really suitable, good, non-American who would be viewed as an impartial figure, perhaps from Europe, who could perform the role which I think is important at this stage. I think there really is perhaps, maybe probably, an opportunity to move toward some solution to the Chechnya situation, and any possibility of an opportunity needs to be grabbed.

I can't offhand think of a good European to choose. I don't think Mr. Bildt has done very well in Bosnia, so not him. But maybe you and we can think of other possible candidates.

Mr. WOLF. Well, if you do, you could just give us a call and let me know and we would be glad to run that up the flagpole and make that recommendation. I want to thank both of you, and also Dr. McFaul. I found it very interesting. I, frankly, wish that this would have been filled, and I thank Mr. Smith and the staff for having the hearing. It's very interesting. Unfortunately, just a handful of people heard you, but I guess that's just the way things are up here on Capitol Hill. But thank you very much.

Dr. RUBLE. Thank you.

Mr. REDDAWAY. Thank you.

[Whereupon at 3:42 p.m., the Commission adjourned.]

[Inserts submitted for the record follow.]

Statement of James F. Collins
Ambassador-at-Large and Special Advisor to the Secretary
of State for the New Independent States
for the
CSCE Commission
July 10, 1996

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and the other Commission members today to address your interest in the Russian presidential election.

The two rounds of the Russian presidential election--conducted June 16 and July 3--were an enormous success for the Russian people. They represent a milestone in Russia's development of democratic institutions. In terms of process, most all observershave judged the election generally as free and fair. It was a vigorously fought campaign. In terms of political message and mandate, the Russian people in the last round faced a clear choice between two different records, two different systems, and two different visions for the future. By a margin of 13 percent they rendered a decisive judgment.

It has been the Administration's view--as Secretary Christopher stated in 1993 and again early this year--that "Russia's struggle to transform itself would be long and hard, and that success was by no means assured." The Russian presidential election, I would argue, both reaffirmed rejection of the past and kept open important opportunities for the success of Russia's transformation to a pluralistic society; it also reaffirmed the Russian people's belief in the politics and

economics of choice and their view that the path to success is to be found in the principles of a market economy and a society based on a constitution and consent of the governed.

Free and Fair Elections

Like anything encompassing the whole of Russia, the recent elections were a vast undertaking. Some 108 million eligible voters had the right to cast ballots at 95,000 polling places in 11 time-zones. In the first round, 75 million voters turned out to choose from among the 11 candidates who secured over a million signatures each in order to register in April, or to vote against all the candidates. In the second round, some 73 million people chose between incumbent President Boris Yeltsin and communist candidate Gennadiy Zyuganov. In the second round, nearly 40 million people voted for President Yeltsin and some 29 million voted for Mr. Zyuganov.

It is certainly no secret to this Commission that many pundits, experts, and observers doubted the elections would succeed or even be held. Predictions--which circulated in Russia as well as here--held, for example, that widespread and substantial fraud was inevitable despite the presence of election monitors in polling places and comprehensive means of checking and disaggregating the vote-counts. Yet that was not the outcome. Mr. Chairman, I ask to be included in the Record the full report of the Observer Mission from the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights which concluded, inter alia, that:

"in general the election was well-managed and efficiently run," and "the (Observer Mission) believes that the results declared accurate reflect the wishes of the voters on the day and that this election is a further consolidation of the democratic process in the Russian Federation."

I also ask to be included in the Record the full reports of the International Republican Institute ("generally honest, openly administered, and unmarred by irregularities of a consequential scale") and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems ("IFES believes that the results of the election are an accurate reflection of the popular will").

While the Russian people and their leaders are responsible for the conduct of the elections on June 16 and July 3, I would like to mention the efforts of dozens of Americans who, with the support of the Congress and the American people, fanned out across Russia from Arkhangelsk to Novosibirsk in recent years to share their experiences in making democracy work. Although no two democratic systems are precisely alike, Russian political activists borrowed from these guests of Russia and from our experience as they crafted their own structures and systems. For the past five years, representatives from the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, the International Republican Institute, and the National Democratic Institute spent thousands of hours explaining the nuts and bolts of campaigning, from sound bites to posters, from organizing volunteers to setting up constituent case officers

efter a successful election, and on the importance of having observers at every polling station. This is a contribution of which all Americans, the Congress and the Administration can be proud.

While essentially free and fair, the elections were not spotless. There were some reports of minor irregularities involving supporters of the communists at a number of polling stations. There have also been reports that the media was biased in favor of the Yeltsin campaign, a point made by some international observers. We have also seen reports that the Yeltsin campeign actively sought the support of journalists, and there have been allegations of payoffs from different camps. We have no information corroborating these allegations. Needless to say, we find such behavior, if true, regrettable. But we might also keep in mind that many in the media saw the integrity of their profession--their ability to pursue journalism in the sense that we understand it here--tied up with the victory of President Yeltsin. They were concerned that a Zyuganov victory might mean an end to unfettered press. In that sense, it is not surprising that many in the media favored Yeltsin.

We should remember that the emergence of a free media has been one of the triumphs of reform in Russia. These are the same media that have relentlessly and critically reported on Russian government policies in, for instance, Chechnya. It is also true that some media outlets supported the Communist Party and the party has a large grass roots organization that enabled it to get out its election message

The Electoral Mandate

Forty-five years ago George Kennan wrote in an article in Foreign Affairs, entitled "America and Russia's Future," cautioning that after the end of the Soviet era we should be particularly careful about coming to conclusions about developments in Russia based on our own experience. "The ways by which people advance toward dignity and enlightenment in government," Kennan wrote, "are things that constitute the deepest and most intimate processes of national life."

In the days ahead, we will witness some of the kinks of an emerging democracy being worked out. Russia has never before undergone a democratic transition of power. As a result, while some procedures are set forth in the law; others remain to be defined. The Constitution provides that, one month after the declaration of the official results by the Central Election Commission, the new President takes power. No ceremony is prescribed by the Constitution. With no precedent, the ceremony for installing the new President is still to be decided.

Within two weeks of the inauguration, the new President submits to the Duma his nomination for Prime Minister. The Duma has one legislative week to act on the nomination. If the Duma rejects three candidates for the post of Prime Minister, the President appoints a Prime Minister, dissolves the Duma, and schedules new Duma elections to take place within four months. However, the Duma cannot be dissolved until the second year of its life, which begins in mid-December 1996.

Against this background and with due recognition for the fact that I am addressing the political processes of a foreign country, I would like to remark on the actual and potential significance of the election from the perspective of Russia's political development:

- o the election, was historic as the first time in Russia's 1,000-year history that the people chose their senior national leader; it showed that the politics of consensus-building which we have regarded as normal for generations have had a significant success in Russia; it contributed, in Kennan's words, to Russia's "advance toward dignity and enlightenment in government";

- o the election was a personal triumph for President Yeltsin, who had single-digit popularity ratings in mid-winter;

- o in the multiple-choice context of the December Parliamentary elections, about one-third of the Russian people supported the communist party and its allies; another third supported committed democrats and reformers. In the second round of the Presidential election, and despite ample reasons for casting protest votes against the incumbent, the electorate's verdict was clearer. This amounts to a further serious repudiation of the communist past.

The mandate for the future endorses the politics and economics of choice, but is far from prescriptive in detail. Perhaps most important, the election cleared away political obstacles to reform--people and interest-groups using the delicate leadership equation to deflect reformist policies. It will be up to President Yeltsin and his team to make use of the mandate, however. They are now organizing for their work. They face a huge challenge in realizing the potential afforded by the elections. It is premature to make judgments about what they are likely or unlikely to achieve. Moreover, as the newly elected President and his supporters must be only too fully aware, the realities of Russia's economy, its social problems, and the many issues left over from the initial transition away from Russia's communist past, are just as real today as they were the day before the election.

Nevertheless, statements by Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and others, personnel changes over the past weeks and some of our own contacts with officials likely to remain in the government provide some indication of where President Yeltsin would like to go. Clearly, there is interest in moving forward with reforms and putting an end to the brutal and ill-conceived military operation in Chechnya. Over the past 19 months we have regularly and at the highest levels made known our opposition to Russian military action in Chechnya. We will use the post-election period to urge Moscow to find a prompt, peaceful solution to this problem.

In the coming months, the Russian government will face the challenge of sustaining and advancing its economic reform program. Russia's leadership is making clear that an economic priority for the coming phase is to make Russia a competitive economy that can attract and use effectively foreign investment. The election campaign also underscored that Russia's people expect their leaders to address pressing social issues and the corrosive problems of crime and corruption. These matters effectively will demand difficult decisions for President Yeltsin and the new government.

As the government approaches these questions, one of the major sticking-points is taxes and budget outlays. Some observers have said that campaign economics may have added significantly to Russia's budget burdens in the last several months--and the standards of the IMF loan may have been breached. We think it premature to reach any conclusions. We certainly note that many suggestions for budget outlays were made during the campaign. We do not know the extent of actual expenditures. Let me note, however, that Russian capital markets reacted favorably to Yeltsin's victory in the first round. We may well see an inflow of capital from overseas now that Yeltsin has been reelected.

Whatever the case, an essential move will be to consolidate those steps necessary to build on the record of increasing economic stabilization that has characterized the work of Prime Minister Chernomyrdin's government over the past year. It will

be equally important that Russia's authorities address issues such as requirement for a stable tax code, a developed legal framework for market relations and the institutions of modern finance and securities markets if the objective Russia has set for itself is to be realized.

Equally important will be the decision Russia's leaders take in the coming months to cope with the issues of crime and corruption. During the election campaign, the support accorded the candidacy of General Lebed and others who spoke out on the need to address this aspect of Russia's present circumstances made clear the priority the Russian people attach to dealing with this matter. At the same time, Russia's continuing interest in integration with the institutions of the West will require that Russia continue to strengthen respect for human rights and the rule of law must accompany programs and efforts to address these and other issues of social order.

The Russian Elections and American Foreign Policy

An historic event for Russia, the Russian electorate's decision has vital consequences for us. In re-validating the mandate for President Yeltsin to lead Russia and to persevere in Russia's transformation, the Russian people have also validated the progress our nations have made in building the new relationship based on cooperation in place of confrontation. They have kept the path open to continue Russia's integration with the industrial democracies and to cooperate with us on a full agenda. We share important

responsibilities with Russia as nuclear powers, in working on regional political issues in places like the Middle East and Bosnia, and in preparing the global agenda for the next century's work on the environment and proliferation.

For our part, we are anxious and ready to take up the promise offered by the results of last week's election. That result reflected the work of five years of bipartisan foreign policy: Americans cannot and should not claim credit for the outcome of Russia's election, but the United States can claim credit for maintaining policies of support for democracy and economic reform in Russia. Together with the most comprehensive possible engagement we could maintain between the U.S. and Russia, these policies provided incentives for the peoples of Russia in building new lives and new economic mechanisms which are closely connected with the outside world -- not isolated from it. That support will continue.

Indeed, "steady as she goes" should be our watchword now. Our interests are served by remaining patient, assuring the Russians that our doors remain open to cooperation on the full range of security, economic, and political issues while at the same time neither ignoring nor condoning destructive Russian policies and actions. We will continue to vigorously promote U.S. interests by fostering democracy, reform and Russia's integration with the West.

A new Russia has emerged in the post-Soviet period. Our policy has supported and offered moral and material assistance --primarily technical assistance--as Russians sought to dismantle unwieldy and unworkable Soviet structures and create in their stead new institutions, institutions that would be responsive to the Russian people. Over the past five years, the United States has supported democratic change and free markets, and we have encouraged Russia's increasingly close and beneficial association with the community of democratic nations.

We have extended economic assistance, both bilaterally and through the International Monetary Fund, enabling Russia to beat back the threat of hyperinflation, and to build fundamental market institutions. We have provided technical expertise to help dismantle the state-controlled economy and place real assets in the hands of real Russians. Now, approximately two-thirds of the country's economic output comes from the privately-owned sector of the economy. Queues are a thing of the past; now stores and shops--many owned by Russian entrepreneurs, I might add -- are concerned about advertising and merchandising, things that never concerned their socialist predecessors.

The U.S. Congress has played a leading role in promoting reform in Russia by adopting, in a broad bipartisan vote, the Freedom Support Act to support the transition of the New Independent States into the community of democratic nations. Every living President and every living Secretary of State

endorsed this historic piece of legislation. They understood that, as a democratic nation, we could not turn away from an historic opportunity to help a former foe reform, and in so doing end decades of dangerous confrontation.

Of course, we all recognized then that no amount of Western assistance could single-handedly lift Russia and the other New Independent States out of their difficulties. That was not our goal. Our goal was, and still is, to help reformers in these new countries help themselves, to provide them with training and access to new ideas that will help them nurture and protect their new freedoms.

This policy of support for reform and comprehensive engagement has had direct benefits to the U.S. and already helped make every American more secure. The START I treaty will enable us to cut our nuclear arsenals by 9,000 warheads, and the START II treaty, which was ratified by the Senate in January and which President Yeltsin has pledged to get ratified in the Duma later this year, will cut another 5,000. We've also worked with Russia and three of its neighbors -- Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakstan -- to make sure that the breakup of the Soviet Union did not lead to the proliferation of nuclear-weapons states. Russia has withdrawn its soldiers from Germany, the former Warsaw Pact countries of Eastern Europe and the Baltic States. And in Bosnia, our soldiers are serving side-by-side with Russian soldiers in support of the Dayton Accords.

We will continue to support Russian reform and the integration of Russia into the world economy. We believe that the mandate President Yeltsin has won could be used to re-energize reform. Integration is a natural consequence of reform. At the recent G-7/P-8 summit in Lyon, the Russian delegation participated in the discussion of global and political issues--an expansion of the Russian role in that forum. Further reform in Moscow will facilitate further integration. It would certainly make Russia a more attractive partner for international, including American, investment.

In the months ahead, we will continue to pursue a wide-ranging security and foreign policy agenda with the Russians. We would like to see the Duma move forward with ratification of START II. We would like to sign CTBT in September. We would like to continue our cooperation addressing regional conflicts in the Middle East, Chechnya, and Bosnia. Of course, differences remain -- for instance on NATO enlargement and Moscow's proposed nuclear reactor sale to Iran. We will continue to address these too. As Secretary Christopher has said, we will cooperate with the Russians where we can and manage our differences where necessary.

We have acted promptly on our agenda following the elections. President Clinton spoke with President Yeltsin July 5, and Vice President Gore will travel to Moscow July 13 for the seventh meeting of the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission. In Moscow the Vice President will have the opportunity to review key elements of our agenda with the highest levels of the Russian government.

We have been quick off the mark after the elections, but consistent with a deliberately conceived policy in place since the first days of the Administration. It is a policy that has helped turn a former adversary into a country with whom we cooperate on many issues. It is a policy that has contributed to our own and global security. It is a policy behind which all Americans can continue to unite.

"Russia's Bumpy Road to Democracy"

Michael McFaul

Testimony before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, United States Congress, July 10, 1996, 14:00-16:00, Room 2255, Rayburn House Office Building.

Russia's Bumpy Road to Democracy

by Michael McFaul

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Why Yeltsin Won

At the beginning of the year, few analysts or politicians predicted that Boris Yeltsin would win reelection as Russia's president. In elections for parliament in December 1995, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) captured 22% of the popular vote, followed by ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky whose Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) won 11 percent. Our Home Is Russia, the pro-reformist electoral bloc founded by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, won only 10 percent of the popular vote, while Grigory Yavlinsky's Yabloko party captured a paltry seven percent. Most observers argues that the balance of forces in 1995 had shifted distinctly to the communist left and nationalist right.

If, however, the December 1995 electoral results were grouped into two "parties" -- those for the current course of reform in Russia and those against -- the outcome in 1995 did not look much different from previous elections in Russia. Nearly 28 % of voters in 1995 supported core reformist parties, another 41 percent cast their ballot for core opposition parties (the CPRF, the LDPR, the Agrarian Party of Russia, and Viktor Anpilov's militant communist group, "Working Russia", and the remainder voted for either apolitical, centrist groups such as Women of Russia or new, ill-defined parties. This balance of support has remained stable throughout Russia's brief electoral history.

The demography of Russian voting behavior also have remained stable. Urban voters support reformist parties, while rural voters back opposition parties. The younger the voter, the more likely they are to support a reformist candidate, while older voters tend to support opposition candidates. Education and wealth correlate positively with support for reform parties, while uneducated and poor voters are more likely to vote for opposition groups.

This rigid and stable structure of Russia's electorate delimited the prospects and constrained the campaign strategies of all presidential contenders. Given the polarization among Russia's voters, only one candidate from the reform side of the ledger and one opposition candidate stood a chance of advancing past the first round of Russia's two-round presidential electoral system. By March 1996, polls unambiguously showed that these two candidates would be Boris Yeltsin and CPRF leader, Gennady Zyuganov. The results of the first round demonstrated that Yeltsin had captured the core reformist vote, while Zyuganov won almost all of the opposition vote. To win in the second round, both candidates had to reach beyond their core supporters to the amorphous, centrist voters who did not vote for either top contender in the first round. Yeltsin's strategy was successful; Zyuganov's strategy was not.

Yeltsin's strategy for capturing the center was simple -- convince these voters that Yeltsin was the lesser of two evils and scare these voters into thinking that revolutionary turmoil would ensue should Zyuganov win. To make it easier for voters to support Yeltsin, his campaign first worked to eliminate or mute the president's negatives. First, Yeltsin's image had to be changed. The president lost twenty pounds, stopped drinking, and began to appear frequently in public again. Second, negative policies had to

be changed. In a reversal of past practice, Yeltsin began to insist that back wages to workers be paid. He also raised pensions, increased salaries of government employees (including military personnel), and began distributing "pork" on his campaign stops throughout the country. Most dramatically, at the end of March, he pledged to end the war in Chechnya. Between the first and second rounds, he then persuaded former presidential candidate, General Aleksandr Lebed, to join his government in order to signal to Russia's voter that he was serious about fighting crime and corruption.

Parallel to this positive campaign to remake Yeltsin's image, policies and government, Yeltsin's team also unleashed a hard-hitting negative media blitz against communism. The Yeltsin campaign successfully defined the election as a referendum on seventy years of Soviet communism, and deftly avoided letting the vote be about Yeltsin's record. As defined by the mass media (virtually monopolized by Yeltsin), this election was not between two individuals, but between two ways of life. When defined in these terms, the majority of Russia's centrist voters opted for the current course of reform, rather than a return to the past.

To win, Zyuganov had to capture a much smaller percentage of the "centrist" vote. He and his campaign, however, grossly misread this part of the electorate. Zyuganov's strategists erroneously believed that Russia's political spectrum consisted of three parts -- "democrats", "communists", and "nationalists." To reach beyond his core communist supporters, therefore, Zyuganov's campaign championed nationalist and patriotic themes rather than economic issues or social-democratic slogans. This strategy partially succeeded in that Zyuganov did receive more support in the second round than

communist parties had won in previous elections. Ultimately, however, Zyuganov's nationalist rhetoric frightened centrist voters tired of confrontational politics and longing for stability.

Zyuganov's campaign also lacked the means and technology to communicate to these centrist voters. Unlike any other party in Russia, the CPRF had the organizational capacity to run a grassroots, door-to-door campaign. As demonstrated by the high voter turnout in rural areas, these methods proved extremely effective at mobilizing loyal communist supporters. However, these tactics were ineffective at reaching new, undecided voters, who generally received their political information through television. Because the Communist Party had limited financial resources, no experience in using television for campaign purposes, and limited access to Russia's pro-Yeltsin television networks, Zyuganov failed to communicate to these centrist voters. In the second round, this segment of Russia's electorate voted overwhelmingly for Boris Yeltsin.

Russia's Democracy Test

One election does not a democracy make. Russian politics over the year, however, did help to clarify some of our assessments about the regime in Moscow. Polarized for years into optimists and pessimists about the future of Boris Yeltsin and Russian democracy more generally, both camps finally faced a critical empirical test of their assumptions, models, and predictive capabilities. With the main event -- the presidential election -- now over, the optimists can claim temporary victory.

Though difficult to generalize, the gloom-and-doom school

shared several assumptions about the Yeltsin regime, Russian electoral politics, and Russian political culture. First, Yeltsin was no democrat. He had revealed his true autocratic proclivities first in October 1993 and then with the war in Chechnya. For Gorbachev groupies, Yeltsin became enemy number one even earlier. It followed, then, that Yeltsin was not serious about the electoral process; he would either falsify the results or postpone the vote, but never give up power. Consequently, from this perspective, the presidential election had no political significance. Cartels, mafias, and under-the-rug Kremlin politics ultimately drove Russian politics, not voters and their preferences.

Second, this school of thought proclaimed that if Yeltsin did allow a free and fair election, he would most certainly lose. According to these analysts, the results of the 1995 December parliamentary elections marked a dramatic swing to the communist left and nationalist right. Voters, in their view, wanted to go back to the Soviet past or forward to a more imperialist future.

Third, and following from this analysis of electoral preferences, the gloom-and-doom school declared that the Russian people were inherently if not genetically "unfit" for democracy. Whether citing Soviet culture or tsarist traditions, these writers asserted that because Russia had never been a democracy, Russia could never be a democracy.

Fourth, pessimists insisted that Russia was an imperial state and would continue to pursue aggressive policies against its neighbors and the West no matter what the outcome in the presidential election.

Over the long run, all of these assumptions may prove to be true. For those interested in explaining and predicting Russian

politics in this pivotal year, however, this general approach to thinking about Russia proved confusing, misleading, and ultimately wrong.

Regarding Boris Yeltsin and his regime, it was right to call his actions in Moscow in October 1993 and in Chechnya in December 1994 undemocratic, avoidable, and tragic. Yeltsin bears ultimate responsibility for both of these mini-civil wars. Had Yeltsin embraced democratic reform with the vigor that he carried out economic reform -- specifically, had he called for new elections, adopted a new constitution, and created a new political party in 1991 -- this bloodshed might have been avoided.

Yet, analysts were wrong to assume that these past transgressions against democracy would compel Yeltsin to thwart the democratic process in the future. On the contrary, there was plenty of evidence to suggest that Yeltsin wanted to revive Russia's fragile democratic institutions. In December 1993, Yeltsin called on the people to ratify a new constitution. Remarkably, since this referendum, all major political actors in Russia, including Boris Yeltsin, continue to respect and abide by these new rules of the game. Moreover, relatively free and fair elections for parliament took place in 1993 and again in 1995. Entering the 1996 presidential electoral season, then, we had compelling evidence to believe that Yeltsin would abide by the democratic process. Despite all the claims of impending fraud, postponement, and military coups, Russia's historic and unprecedented election for head of state happened on time, under law, and without falsification.

Pessimists also misjudged the Russian electorate. A dramatic swing to the left or right did not take in 1995. On the contrary, the results demonstrated tremendous stability in voter behavior. In

1995, (similar to 1993 and 1991 and 1990) roughly a third of Russia's voters cast their ballot for militant opposition parties, a little less than a third for reformist representatives, and the remaining third for amorphous "centrist" groups and populist leaders. The first round of 1996 presidential race reflected this same balance of electoral preferences. In the second round, when the race became polarized between reform or regress, centrist voters gravitated back to Yeltsin and populist supporters either sided with the reform candidate or stayed home. Though nationalists, communists, and imperialists all appeared on the ballot, the majority of Russians ultimately opted for Boris Yeltsin, the candidate mostly clearly identified with market and democratic reforms. Claims of radical swings of voters against the reform process, therefore, grossly misinterpreted Russian electoral dynamics over the last few years.

Third, the behavior of Russian voters in the last year has resoundingly refuted the claim that Russians are apathetic or predisposed to authoritarianism. In 1995, sixty five percent of the eligible population participated in an election that the gloom-and-doom school told them did not matter. In 1996, voter turnout climbed to nearly seventy percent.

The fourth premise about Russian foreign policy has not yet been refuted conclusively. History has demonstrated that democratically elected governments can pursue imperialist policies just as aggressively as authoritarian regimes. Nonetheless, two facts remain. Firs, Russia would have been a more imperial power under Zyuganov than Yeltsin; the lesser of two evils did win. Second, public opinion polls show conclusively that most Russians have no interest in recreating the Soviet Union by military means. If the

Russian government continues to respect the democratic process, then the Russian voters may be the greatest bulwark against Russian imperial expansion.

Obstacles to Democratic Consolidation

Yeltsin's electoral victory is only partial victory for Russian democracy. Much more needs to be done. First, Russia has no effective multi-party system. Like Russia's previous elections over the last five years, this vote was a referendum on communism. In the future, however, attempts to polarize voters into pro-communist and anti-communist camps will fail. For democracy to consolidate, interest-based parties must replace this Manichean divide of Russian society. If they do not, populist, extremist and unpredictable leaders will dominate future elections as General Alexander Lebed's meteoric rise to power already has demonstrated. Second, Russia's civil society is still weak and nascent. Business lobbies and wealthy economic interest groups played powerful and important roles in this election. Other kinds of societal organizations, such as women's organizations, trade unions, or ethnic groups -- did not. To endure, Russian democracy needs a strong and independent civil society.

Third, Russia's super-presidential system concentrates too much power in one person's hands. Under Yeltsin, this system generally has served the interests of reform. In the hands of a demagogue, however, this institution quickly could become democracy's greatest enemy. To establish real checks and balances within Russia's system of government, parliament needs to assume greater control over the presidency.

Fourth, this electoral campaign demonstrated that even Russia's lauded press is not as free and independent as we once thought. During the disappearances of Yeltsin in the last few days of the campaign, the only significant questioning of the official Kremlin line came from the Western press. After Yeltsin's virtual monopoly over national television during the campaign, Russian journalists will need to earn their credentials as Russia's "fourth" institution of democracy all over again.

Finally, Russia's leaders still have not embraced the principle of the rule of law. In June, as both presidential candidates were heartily proclaiming the need for greater law and order, a Dagestani friend of mine was imprisoned without food, water or the ability to inform relatives of his whereabouts for 24 hours for no crime other than the possession of a dark, "Chechen-like" complexion. Lebed's ignorant remarks about religion and his recent Draconian statements about law and order portend a protracted struggle for human rights in Russia.

The U.S. Role in Promoting Russian Democracy

Ultimately, Russians themselves will have to address these problems with their nascent democratic system. However, the United States government can help. First and foremost, the United States government must vocally criticize undemocratic polices and practices by the Russian government such as the Chechen war or anti-semitism. Before the election, the argument could be made (not my own) that American officials had to remain quiet about such issues in order to help Boris Yeltsin win reelection. Now, such rationales are only excuses for inaction.

Second, the United States has in place institutions to assist in the development of Russia's democratic consolidation. Through the National Endowment for Democracy, the Eurasia Foundation, and the democratic assistance programs funded by the Agency the International Development, the United States can continue to play a helpful role in fostering the development of democratic institutions in Russia. To be effective, these programs must focus their efforts on assisting societal-based groups, not the institutions of the Russian state. Only when Russian society is strong enough to demand its democratic rights will the Russian state respond.

Conclusion

The shortcomings in Russia's nascent political system, however, do not negate the tremendous victory for democracy and democrats in Russia. The precedent and routine of this presidential vote will raise the costs of future threats to the democratic process. When gloom-and-doomers begin again to warn us of Russia's impending collapse, crisis, or authoritarianism, let's remember how poorly they predicted events in this historic year for Russian democracy.

RUSSIA HEADS FOR TROUBLE

An Editorial Published in The New York Times, *July 2, 1996*

WASHINGTON

Boris Yeltsin's recent hiring and firing of several top aides has produced a strange euphoria among some Western experts on Russia. They predict that President Yeltsin will be re-elected in tomorrow's run-off election. They also interpret the dismissal of four hard-liners and the promotion of former Gen. Aleksandr Lebed as meaning that democracy has won out, that Mr. Lebed will be its guarantor, and that economic reform can now forge ahead.

In my view, the most hopeful realistic scenario looks very different. Democracy is no less endangered now than it was before. Economic reform will continue to be hindered by a heavily indebted state that performs badly and strangles business activity with red tape and excessive taxes. In his new capacity as Mr. Yeltsin's top security adviser, Mr. Lebed will undoubtedly challenge rampant corruption and organized crime—the most pernicious symptoms of state weakness. But these forces will almost certainly defeat him.

The war in Chechnya should be a brighter spot, because Mr. Yeltsin's ouster of several Kremlin hawks and Mr. Lebed's readiness for radical concessions to the Chechens may at last bring the bloodshed to an end. But relations with the West probably will not improve because Mr. Lebed is in keeping with Mr. Yeltsin's increasingly nationalistic stance.

Two problems are likely to make the assessment even more downbeat. First, there is Mr. Yeltsin's fragile health, which may damage his showing at the polls tomorrow. If he had to resign and if there were still no obvious replacement, a succession crisis could be still more destabilizing than today's ruthless struggle for power.

The second cloud is the economic crisis that Mr. Lebed and others have been predicting for later this year. At a news conference on June 24, the economist Andre Illarionov, a former Yeltsin adviser, cited Finance Ministry calculations that the consolidated budget deficit, a crucial economic indicator, rose in April to 11.8 percent of the gross domestic product.

Neither this figure nor the one for May, which is likely to be worse, has been officially published, presumably because they would provoke alarm: The Government and the International Monetary Fund had agreed that 3.85 percent of G.D.P. should be the maximum deficit, a target that now seems unattainable. That level was a condition for the I.M.F.'s $10 billion loan to Russia in April.

Writing in *Izvestia,* Mr. Illarionov said that since January, the money supply has been increased by the ruble equivalent of $10 billion. This seriously violates the I.M.F. pact and foreshadows a sharp rise in inflation. Monthly inflation may well now rise to about 10 percent in the fall, just when the agreement requires it to be declining to 1 percent.

Andrei Illarionov also detailed the Government's borrowing spree, set off by alarmingly low tax revenues and campaign handouts. "The country faces the clear long-term prospect of working exclusively to service and pay off the Government's debts," he said. "Alternatively, it may go bankrupt." Besides Mr. Illarionov some leading forecasters including Grigory Yavlinsky point to the danger

of a financial crisis in the fall that would scare off desperately needed investment. They predict such things as the failure of important banks, a collapse in the Government bond market, which has come to look like a pyramid- scheme, and rising social unrest over the chronic nonpayment of wages. Last week, the Labor Minister reported that current wage arrears totaled $5.8 billion in an economy with an average wage of $37 a week.

What sort of administration is likely to emerge after tomorrow's elections? Strikingly, politicians in recent days have advocated a rather broad coalition that would include almost the whole political spectrum. Mr. Lebed, the most outspoken, has repeatedly called for the widest possible coalition under Mr. Yeltsin, with Communists in charge of ministries like Social Welfare, Labor and Justice. Mr. Lebed would include even the ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky in the Cabinet.

Mr. Yeltsin said yesterday that he wants a coalition government of competent ministers not controlled by their parties. He has also said he plans to change his team "very seriously." He will take his lead from "the opinion of the voters," he has said, and will not bring back radical market reformers.

The position of Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist candidate, on a coalition is especially interesting. In the first round, Mr. Zyuganov won only 32 percent of the vote, roughly 3 percent less than Mr. Yeltsin. Since then, Mr. Zyuganov has behaved enigmatically, conducting a low-key campaign until the last few days and staying in Moscow. His behavior does not seem so strange, however, if we look at the complex considerations that underlie it.

He believes, apparently sincerely, that Russia urgently needs a broad coalition Government. A week ago, he presented his own plan showing how to represent all forces. "Any thinking person understands that Russia will inevitably have a coalition Government," he said. "The Nation is split." Without one, he warns, dangerous divisions and violence are likely to occur.

Mr. Zyuganov also reportedly believes that Mr. Yeltsin has decided to win by fair means or foul. If many people think Mr. Yeltsin has "stolen" the election, he fears, radical Communist groups may turn to violence and go underground. Mr. Zyuganov would thus have the difficult task of maintaining unity both within both his People's Patriotic Bloc and the Communist Party. He has also said he fears that Mr. Yeltsin might find a pretext to ban the party, as he did its predecessor in 1991.

Taken together, these considerations as well as fears of an economic crisis in the fall, may well explain why Mr. Zyuganov seems ambivalent about winning the election. He has negotiated with important players, including Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, who gave him a warm reception and agreed with him that cooperation among the political parties was necessary.

So far, there has been no definite indication whether Mr. Yeltsin would be prepared to include top Communists in a new administration. But Mr. Yeltsin can hardly ignore Mr. Zyuganov's campaign for a grand coalition, especially since the Communist leader has received strong encouragement in that regard from the President's own allies.

If Mr. Yeltsin wins, he will be under a lot of pressure to be accommodating. But would he offer Mr. Zyuganov a high enough position that Mr. Zyuganov could accept without splitting the Communists? Likewise, if Mr. Zyuganov by any chance wins, some of his hard-line colleagues might prevent him from building the equitable coalition he sketched in his plan. They might insist on its being dominated by Communists.

Assuming, though, that Mr. Yeltsin wins, what will be the policies of his administration? The politics of his virtual running mate, Mr. Lebed, gives some guidance. When appointing him, Mr. Yeltsin proclaimed "the union of two politicians, the union of two programs." Mr. Lebed's program on security, fighting crime and military reform, Mr. Yeltsin said, would provide correctives to his own.

In accepting his assignment as the President's national security adviser, Mr. Lebed said, "Eleven million people believed I can impose order, and I take on myself that difficult responsibility." Anyone who knows the level of disorder, economic criminality, and official corruption in Russia can only conclude that a person who makes such a statement intends to act—as Mr. Lebed has indicated in the past—in authoritarian ways.

That was the warning expressed by Russia's most respected democrat, Sergei Kovalev. In February, he protested Mr. Yeltsin's drift toward authoritarianism by resigning as his adviser on human rights. Now he predicts that under a Yeltsin-Lebed alliance, the country will quickly cease to be a state based on law. "Russia will be governed in a Draconian manner," he said recently.

Mr. Kovalev's warning is on target, with one reservation. Russian authoritarianism is likely to be messy and untidy. Mr. Lebed is sure to be frustrated in his quest to "impose order," to shut out pernicious influences from the West and to lure back what he claims to be $400 billion sent abroad in the capital flight that has taken place in recent years.

Apart from the enormity of the job and the unreliability of the law-and-order forces at his disposal, Mr. Lebed cannot succeed if Mr. Yeltsin is not squarely behind him. After the President has used him for his own re-election, Mr. Yeltsin is unlikely to give him sustained support.

Mr. Yeltsin has long relied on the Mafia-linked clans that influence many decisions in politics and especially the economy. Most clan leaders of industry, agriculture and banking, with their corrupt allies in Government, do not want democracy or serious economic reform. They want Mr. Yeltsin to continue to make Russia safe for them in particular, they want security for the assets they acquired in the furtive carving up of the old Soviet economy. This requires tough rule to suppress political opposition, control the media and intimidate workers, the poor and pensioners. It also requires an end to anything but a facade of democracy.

Some economists on the fringe of the clans believe Mr. Lebed's occasional nods toward democracy are not serious, and hope he will play the role of Gen. Augusto Pinochet of Chile, combining market reforms with an iron hand in politics.

Mr. Yeltsin has served the clans well. So if Mr. Lebed's imposition of order starts to affect the interests of these groups, as it inevitably will if the effort is serious, Mr. Yeltsin will surely with-

draw his support. Then Mr. Lebed will have to choose between backing off and resigning. Only the latter course would keep for him the respect of his already partly disillusioned supporters. If Mr. Yeltsin wins and installs a grand coalition, Mr. Zyuganov is likely to face the same sort of choice.

A continuing drift toward authoritarianism will suit not only the clans but also Mr. Yeltsin. In the last 2 years, he has been behaving increasingly like a czar. He pardons cronies, ignores the law, issues a torrent of decrees and hands out economic favors by the ton.

An especially notable but little reported example of Mr. Yeltsin's authoritarianism occurred 3 months ago. According to even pro-Yeltsin sources like the well-known TV anchor Yevgeny Kiselev, Mr. Yeltsin ordered decrees drawn up in March that would have canceled the election, closed down parliament and banned the Communist Party. Only when his advisers declined to go along did he back off.

Westerners, like President Clinton, who saw round one of the elections as evidence of Russian democracy's strength, should ponder this evidence. Whoever wins round two—and a Zyuganov-led coalition might not rule so differently from a Yeltsin one—this just might be Russia's last truly free election for some time to come.

Commission

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ELECTION FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION SECOND ROUND OF VOTING FINAL STATEMENT OF THE OSCE/ODIHR OBSERVER MISSION

Introduction

On 15th March 1996, Dr N T Ryabov, Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission of the Russian Federation, issued to Ambassador Audrey Glover, the Director of OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the formal invitation to co-ordinate the international observers at the Presidential election. On 1st April 1996 OSCE/ODIHR sent the Note Verbale to all 54 participating States of OSCE requesting them to send observers. Michael Meadowcroft was appointed to act as Co-ordinator and, from the end of April, the long-term observers began to take up their positions in the regions of Russia. OSCE/ODIHR has established six regional offices: in Irkutsk, Kazan, Khabarovsk, Novosibirsk, St Petersburg and Stavropol. A central office was established in Moscow and, with assistance from the European Union, logistical and information services were provided.

By polling day in the first round of voting, some five hundred international observers had been deployed across the Russian Federation. Other observers also monitored the election, some of whom participated in the reporting back sessions which preceded the Statement on the first round. Approximately four hundred observers were able to return for the second round of voting. Observers were deployed right across Russia, and though there was still a disproportionate number in and around Moscow and St Petersburg, the geographical imbalance was less than at the elections of 1993 and 1995. Every observer was encouraged to contribute to the consideration of the Final Statement on the election and to participate in report-back meetings in each region and in Moscow. OSCE/ODIHR is confident that this Final Statement represents the considered views of the International Observer Mission.

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The Legal and Administrative Framework

We commented in our Final Statement on the first round that, given the scale and particular difficulties of the country, the electoral laws and the Central Electoral Commission's regulations were, in principle, sufficient to provide a secure legal framework for the conduct of the election. We are still satisfied that this remains the case, however we express our concern at the possible abuse of the system of "green certificates" enabling an elector to register up to the last minute in a different polling district. We are also particularly concerned at the CEC decision, taken after the first round of voting, which extended this provision still further and permitted voting without certificates purely by order of the local electoral commission. In our opinion this process lacked sufficient safeguards against multiple voting.

We draw particular attention below to the serious problems with the behaviour of the mass media and we believe that there is a definite need for clearer laws to ensure fair treatment of candidates, particularly on television, together with more rigorous enforcement of the existing laws.

There is a further deficiency in the electoral law, in those sections relating to financial accountability. It negates considerably the proper intention of the law, and the wishes of the Central Election Commission, if funds can be spent without any inhibition or limitation on behalf of a candidate by a separate organisation.

We are satisfied that the four levels of electoral commissions, from polling station, to territorial and subject levels and, finally, the Central Electoral Commission, each with the opportunity for all registered candidates and recognised groups to have non-voting members, provides in principle an effective structure for the administration of elections. It would be worth looking again at the basis of appointment of polling station commissions. It is worth recording that approximately one million people are involved in conducting the Russian electoral process, in the vast majority of cases with commendable efficiency, often based on experience gained from four previous elections. With few exceptions, the commissions welcomed international observers and assisted them in their observation.

The Media

The OSCE/ODIHR observer mission has benefited from the expert monitoring carried out by the European Institute for the Media, from whom a separate report is available. The Institute's clear conclusion that there was a significant imbalance in President Yeltsin' favour within the

media, particularly in terms of television coverage, is a serious comment on the ultimate fairness of the electoral process. The bias of the television coverage was not only demonstrated in the quantity of coverage of the candidates but also in the way they and their campaigns were depicted. Long-term observers reported that this tendency was replicated in the regions. The impotence of the Central Electoral Commission in enforcing its own resolutions showed both a lack of will on its members' part and also a need to strengthen the CEC's powers in relation to media regulation during the period of the election campaign.

Circumstantially it is possible to demonstrate the electoral benefit of sympathetic media exposure by noting the late rise in Alexander Lebed's first round vote at a time when it is acknowledged that President Yeltsin's campaign managers decided to enhance his television coverage.

Despite drawing attention to the seriousness of the media situation in the OSCE/ODIHR Final Statement on the first round of voting, little or nothing appears to have been done to improve the situation for the second round.

Candidates' Resources and Support

Our general views on the imbalance of financial resources in favour of President Yeltsin, the actions of some public officials in support of his candidature, and the apparent misuse of his presidential position, often through the actions of local administrations, were detailed in our statement on the first round of voting and we reiterate them here in order that our concern at the erosion of electoral fairness in these ways continues to be made clear. For instance, observers in Tatarstan and Mordova found representatives of the local administration present within the polling station. Also in Tatarstan there was evidence of intimidation with local officials threatening to cut off gas supplies in rural areas if people did not vote for President Yeltsin. In Bashkortostan local administration officials were instructed by representatives of the President to secure a better result for President Yeltsin - with thinly veiled threats on their jobs.

In Moscow the city council put pressure on shops and restaurants in the city centre to display posters which, though ostensibly aimed at increasing voter turnout, were thinly veiled pro-Yeltsin propaganda.

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Polling Day

Observers noted a number of infringements of the electoral law and of the regulations but their general impression was of some improvement between the two rounds of voting and that, although each infringement is serious in itself, they did not collectively materially affect the outcome of the election.

The detailed observer reporting forms for the first round showed that approximately two thirds of all polling stations had observers from at least two candidates. In a number of cases they were absent from polling stations which had had them in the first round. This is of concern to international observers but it may indicate a greater confidence in the integrity of the electoral administration. Observers noted that many candidates' observers were very passive and suggested that training as to their role would be beneficial.

There is again widespread criticism of the lack of secrecy when many individual electors voted. The continued provision of desks, together with pens, in the open area of a number of polling stations suggests that the vital concept and purpose of secret voting have not yet been appreciated. Such provision actually encourages voters to avoid using the booths. In some cases there is a direct correlation between the lack of sufficient polling booths and the prevalence of voting in the open. It is perhaps indicative of the Russian people's confidence in their post-Soviet democracy that so few voters appear concerned at the lack of secrecy. Nonetheless, the principle of secret voting is vital, and observers wish to state their strong view that the physical arrangements of polling stations, the design and number of voting booths, need to be improved and coupled with a firm lead from the electoral commissions in order to resolve this problem.

An associated problem is that of "family voting", that is husband and wife, sometimes with other members of the family obtaining their ballot papers, then discussing and voting collectively, often in the open. Very occasionally men were observed signing for two ballots. As with the issue of secrecy, there is currently little obvious opposition to the practice, but within the context of individual civil rights, and particularly of women's rights, it is at odds with accepted standards of democratic practice.

Observers make the point that infractions of the law and regulations are not always seen as such by the local electoral commissions and suggest that a training programme would help to improve the situation for the future.

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A particular problem was reported from St Petersburg where a number of Russians from the Baltic States had come to the city in order to vote but none were allowed to do so.

Whilst it is undoubtedly legitimate for an electoral commission to seek to encourage the highest possible turnout of voters, the situation in Russia between the two rounds of election inevitably brought the CEC's work in this regard into the political arena. The view that a high turnout would benefit President Yeltsin was unchallenged, and observers state their belief that some steps taken by the CEC to boost the turnout were excessive. The choice of a mid-week day for polling, the blanking out of television screens in favour of exhortations to vote, the extension of absentee voting without certificates, the inauguration of new polling stations at stations and airports at the last moment, are particular examples.

In general the use of mobile boxes was in accordance with the law but, in Tver for instance, there was some evidence of their over-enthusiastic use - including their use in what were in effect new polling places at stations and airports.

Observers were pleased to note the continuing improvement in access to polling stations in prisons and military establishments, although there are still a few where observers were prevented from monitoring voting. The voting process was generally satisfactory in institutions but there were a few reports of staff or relatives putting pressure on electors to vote in a particular way in homes for the elderly or mentally frail.

The moratorium on campaigning was generally observed but a handful of instances of minor campaigning for President Yeltsin was reported.

Observers noted a general improvement in the counting and tabulation processes, compared with the first round, although there was a continuing problem with access to some Territorial Electoral Commissions, particularly in Tatarstan. Only in Astrakhan was a serious infraction of the rules reported. There the first copy of the results protocol was completed in pencil and the other two copies left blank. After checking at the Territorial Commission the three copies were then completed in ink. This is said to be common in the region. Observers noted that results of the first round had not been published in each area and called for this to be checked by the CEC.

Observers noted the remarkable turnround of electoral support for the two candidates in the

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four republics, Bashkortostan, Dagestan, Mordova and Tatarstan, and request the CEC to undertake an enquiry to ascertain whether or not there is evidence of irregularities.

Conclusions:

The OSCE/ODIHR Observer Mission believes that the declared result of the election accurately reflects the wishes of the Russian electorate on the day, and congratulates the voters of the Russian Federation for participating in a further consolidation of the democratic process in the Russian Federation;

In the opinion of the OSCE/ODIHR Observers the concerns detailed above in relation to polling day, though serious in themselves, did not materially affect the outcome of the ballot;

The OSCE/ODIHR Observer Mission believes that the imbalance of media coverage and of resources available to candidates, and the role of some parts of the Presidential administration during the campaign period, marred an otherwise effective and efficient electoral process.

Acknowledgements

The OSCE/ODIHR Observer Mission wishes to pay tribute to the work of the members of the electoral commissions and in particular again to place on record its appreciation of the help and co-operation it has received from the Central Electoral Commission and from the Commissions in the regions and districts in which it has worked.

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5th July 1996

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ELECTION FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
FINAL STATEMENT OF THE OSCE/ODIHR OBSERVER MISSION

Introduction

On 15th March 1996 Dr N T Ryabov, Chairman of the Central Electoral Commission of the Russian Federation, sent Ambassador Audrey Glover, the Director of OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the formal invitation to co-ordinate the international observers at the Presidential election. On 1st April 1996 OSCE/ODIHR sent a Note Verbale to all the 54 participating States of OSCE requesting them to send observers. Michael Meadowcroft was appointed to act as Co-ordinator and, from the end of April, the long-term observers began to take up their positions in the regions of Russia. OSCE/ODIHR has established six regional offices: in Irkutsk, Kazan, Khabarovsk, Novosibirsk, St Petersburg and Stavropol. A central office was established in Moscow and, with assistance from the European Union, logistical and information services were provided.

By polling day, some five hundred international observers had been deployed across the Russian Federation. Other observers also monitored the election, some of whom participated in the reporting back sessions which preceded this statement. Of the known international observers 181 were from European Union countries, seventeen from Norway, 28 from Central and Eastern Europe, including CIS states, 80 from USA and Canada, five from Japan, five from Turkey, two from Croatia, 95 from Parliamentary groups, and the balance from NGOs. These observers were deployed right across Russia, and though there was still a considerable number in and around Moscow and St Petersburg, the geographical imbalance was less than at the previous two elections. A number of observers are still in Russia, observing the final stages of the vote tabulation and preparing to observe the second round of polling.

The Framework

We are satisfied that, given the scale and particular difficulties of the country, the electoral laws and the Commission's regulations were, in principle, sufficient to provide a secure legal framework for the conduct of the election.

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We are also satisfied that the structure of electoral commissions, from polling station, up to the Central Electoral Commission, via the territories and the subjects, each with the opportunity for registered groups and all candidates to have non-voting members, provided, in principle, an effective structure for the administration of the election. With only a few exceptions, the commissions welcomed international observers and enabled them to carry out their observation.

The Media

The provisions of the electoral law with regard to free time on television and radio were carried out with scrupulous fairness but the same cannot be said of the news and comment programme coverage of the different candidates' campaigns. Not only was there a significant imbalance in candidate Yeltsin's favour in the amount of coverage but also his campaign was generally shown in positive terms, compared to other candidates, in particular candidate Zyuganov, who tended to be shown in negative terms. From a very early time the contest came to be regarded as virtually a two horse race and the media reflected - and accelerated - this perception with the result that there was hardly any coverage of the remaining candidates.

Pre-election observation

There were some reported difficulties with registration of voters temporarily resident in an area, who, though entitled to vote, did not have the necessary documents.

Observers also noted that in a number of areas there was manifest support for candidate Yeltsin amongst the local electoral commission members with the consequence that, in such places, there was a tendency that aspects of the election organisation, such as the location of polling stations, were carried out in ways designed to assist candidate Yeltsin. Observers were concerned that in a number of areas members of the federal administration were actively promoting the candidature of candidate Yeltsin, including being official observers on behalf of President Yeltsin, apparently contrary to the provisions of Article 38 (1) of the electoral law.

Also, no doubt as a consequence of the widespread existence of local authorities sympathetic to the incumbent President, observers noted that, on occasion, events were organised at public festivals, with public money, which clearly assisted candidate Yeltsin's campaign. In contrast it was reported to observers that, in some areas, other candidates were refused permission to use public buildings for meetings, contrary to the provisions of the electoral law.

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Although the electoral law clearly states that an incumbent President, running for a second term "may not take advantage of his official standing for the term of election", it would be very difficult to accept that all President Yeltsin's highly publicised visits to different regions, often promising considerable sums of state funds for local projects were entirely in fulfilment of his Presidential duties as opposed to his candidature.

Observers noted with concern these aspects of the election campaign but are not in a position to judge whether or not they had any significant electoral effect.

Polling Day

On polling day itself numerous infringements of the electoral law and regulations were observed, of varying seriousness. Although each of them in themselves are important it is the Observer Mission's considered view that they did not materially affect the outcome of the first round of the election.

The most serious cause for concern was in Tatarstan where, in a number of the polling stations visited, supporters of President Yeltsin were observed inside the polling stations, in front of the booths, openly appealing for voters to support Mr Yeltsin. Moreover, in some cases these supporters entered the booths themselves. Individuals were also observed coming out of the booths carrying several ballot papers. In the same republic individuals presenting several passports were given a number of ballot papers and were occasionally observed to vote more than once. Observers in Tatarstan were concerned at the role played by local observers for President Yeltsin who also held influential positions in the local administration and who appeared to control the activities of the polling station commission chairmen. Observers were also critical of the counting methods in Tatarstan, describing it as "chaotic", including concern at the integrity of the tabulation at the Territorial Commission level.

Despite pre-election statements, no candidate had a complete coverage of polling stations with his Observers. Many polling stations were without any candidates' Observers for long stretches of time. At others it was observed that the candidates' Observers were on good terms with each other, which assisted the electoral process. It was noted that there were more candidates' Observers present at the counts.

The use of electronic scanners was observed and their willing acceptance by the voters noted. However, Observers believe that, in order to ensure the secrecy of the ballot, the design be changed so that the ballot paper is inserted in the front of the machine rather than at the top.

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The Observer Mission noted that, in the main, the same election officials were in charge as at the Duma elections last December and that they were more relaxed with the administrative processes.

Although a few Observers were refused entry to closed establishments which contained polling stations - such as the Zelezno military establishment in Komsomolsk, and also at polling stations in Irkutsk and Tver - it was noted that many more of such establishments - prisons, or military barracks - were open to Observers than at last December's Duma elections. Observers were also present at each level of Commission, including at the Central Electoral Commission, and were satisfied with the methods of vote tabulation. The speed of issuing provisional figures was regarded as a value aid to confidence in the election process.

The most widespread comment amongst Observers was the lack of secrecy when individuals voted. In some cases, in the St Petersburg Region there were no polling booths at all and many other polling station need additional booths. It was considered that a lead is necessary from polling station commissions to ensure that voters are instructed on the need for voting in the booths. The key principle is not that voters have a choice but that an individual's choice to vote in secret is only secure if everyone votes in secret. It may be necessary to reconsider whether a lower maximum figure of 3000 per polling station should be used in order to ameliorate this problem.

Observers were concerned that the Presidential candidates gave a bad example by appearing not to vote in secret when voting with the automatic scanner machine, with the problem listed above.

There were many instances of voting outside the booths, and of family members going into the booths together. Observers, whilst unhappy with such practices, did not get the impression that this necessarily indicated undue influence.

At a polling station in the Jewish Autonomous Oblast three ballot boxes bore Communist Party symbols. At another, at Arsk, in Tatarstan, the Communist Party symbol was displayed on the wall behind the electoral commission's seats.

In a few cases concern was expressed as to the number of transferred voters. for instance, at a polling station in the Khabarovsk region a number of soldiers voted who were not listed on the original register, causing the electorate to increase from 502 to 1800. Observers were concerned that unless the provisions of Article 26 are carefully followed it would be possible to register on a number of registers.

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In a number of cases Observers accompanied the mobile ballot box and in most cases were satisfied that this provision was not abused. However, in parts of the Tver region, some 10% of votes were cast in the mobile box. There were also variations in the methods used for counting them.

Though in the main the ballot boxes were properly shown to be empty, and then sealed, there were instances reported (in the Moscow suburb of Svenigorod) where the boxes were not sealed when Observers arrived at 11am. Instances were also reported of boxes being sealed in advance of 8am, before the arrival of local or International Observers.

The late withdrawal of candidate Tulyeev was not always dealt with by crossing his name off the ballot papers. It was also noted that a few early voters would have lost their votes by voting for him before his withdrawal.

In regard to the count it was noted that there is no definition of how the ballot papers shall be actually counted. Some Commissions divided them into piles for each candidate but others read each paper out and recorded the vote on sheets. Given the occasional problem of making the figures fit the provisions required by the results protocol, it would be worth instructing Commissions to verify the total number of ballots in each box - checking this against the number issued - before separating them into candidates.

Conclusions

The OSCE/ODIHR Observer Mission is satisfied that the allegations in advance of polling day that there would be widespread and substantial electoral fraud have not been fulfilled.

In the opinion of the OSCE/ODIHR Observers, the concerns listed above, though serious in themselves, did not materially affect the result of the ballot.

In general the election was well managed and efficiently run.

The OSCE/ODIHR Observer Mission believes that the results so far declared accurately reflect the wishes of the voters on the day and that this election is a further consolidation of the democratic process in the Russian Federation.

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Recommendations

Now that a second round of voting is confirmed, in which the outcome could conceivably be determined by a small number of votes, it is important that the shortcomings mentioned above in the behaviour of the media, the conduct of the election campaign, and the polling day procedures be addressed as a matter of urgency. The Observer Mission also believes that the early official publication of the voting figures in polling stations would do much to enahnce the transparency of the electoral process.

Acknowledgements

The OSCE/ODIHR Observer Mission would like to place on record its appreciation of the willing help and co-operation it has received from the Central Election Commission and from the Commissions in each of the regions in which it has worked.

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18th June 1996

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